

NINE
SERMONS

UPON THE
Following SUBJECTS;

VIZ.

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|---|---|
| I. The LORD our Righteousness. | VII. The Pharisee and Publican. |
| II. The Seed of the Woman, and the Seed of the Serpent. | VIII. Christ, the Believer's Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption. |
| III. Persecution every Christian's Lot. | IX. The Holy Spirit convincing the World of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment. |
| IV. Abraham's offering up his Son Isaac. | X. The Conversion of Zaccheus. |
| V. Saul's Conversion. | |

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PREFACE

THE following SERMONS, I thank
I may say, were given me by the
Lord Jesus Christ, and were
given to me by the light of his
grace to the Word of God, and
were to us by the Word of
God. They contain the sum and
stance, I will not say Word for
or what was delivered from the
For, as I had Occasion in
land, and England, to preach
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Exhortations agreeable to the
Circumstances, among whom I
preaching the Kingdom of God
and the Word of Freedom to
and the Word of Willing, but
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1860

Adam Davis June 18/5

THE PREFACE.

THE following SERMONS, I think I may say, were given me by the Lord Jesus Christ; and, according to my present Light, are agreeable to the Form of sound Words delivered to us in the lively Oracles of God. They contain the Sum and Substance, I will not say Word for Word, of what was delivered from the Pulpit: For, as I had Occasion in *America*, *Scotland*, and *England*, to preach upon the same Subjects, I was obliged, according to the Freedom and Assistance given me from above, to enlarge, or make Excursions, agreeable to the People's Circumstances amongst whom I was preaching the Kingdom of God. I had no Leisure or Freedom to commit any of them to Writing, but during

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ring my last Voyage from *America* to *England*; nor do I expect to find Leisure to write down any more fresh Discourses, till it shall please God that I embark again. May the Spirit of God, who delights out of the Mouths of Babes and Sucklings to perfect Praise, bless them to every Reader, and put it into their Hearts to pray for their poor, unworthy Servant in Jesus Christ,

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GEORGE WHITEFIELD.

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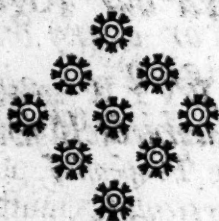
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SERMON I.

The LORD our Righteousness.

Jeremiah xxiii. 6.

The Lord our Righteousness.

WHOEVER is acquainted with the Nature of Mankind in general, or the Propensity of his own Heart in particular, must acknowledge, that *Self-righteousness* is the last Idol that is rooted out of the Heart:— Being once born under a *Covenant of Works*, it is natural for us all to have Recourse to a *Covenant of Works* for our everlasting Salvation. And we have contracted such a *devilish Pride*, by our *Fall from God*, that we would, if not wholly, yet in part at least glory in being the Cause of our own Salvation. We cry out against *Popery*, and that very justly; but we are all *Papists*, at least, I am sure, we are all *Arminians* by Nature; and therefore no Wonder so many natural Men embrace that Scheme. 'Tis true, we disclaim the Doctrine of *Merit*, are ashamed directly to say we deserve any Good at the Hands of God; therefore, as the *Apostle* excellently well observes, we go about, we fetch a Circuit,

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cuit, to establish a Righteousness of our own, and, like the Pharisees of old, will not wholly submit to that Righteousness which is of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

This is the forest, tho' alas the most common, Evil that was ever yet seen under the Sun. An Evil, that in any Age, especially in these Dregs of Time wherein we live, cannot sufficiently be inveighed against:—For as it is with the People, so it is with the Priests; and it is to be feared, even in those Places where once the Truth as it is in Jesus was eminently preached, many Ministers are so sadly degenerated from their pious Ancestors, that the Doctrines of Grace, especially the personal, all-sufficient Righteousness of Jesus, is but too seldom, too slightly mentioned. Hence the Love of many waxeth cold; and I have often thought, was it possible, that this single Consideration would be sufficient to raise our venerable Forefathers again from their Graves.

The Righteousness of Jesus Christ is one of those great Mysteries the Angels desire to look into, and seems to be one of the first Lessons that God taught Men after the Fall. For, what were the Coats that God made to put on our first Parents, but Types of the Application of the Merits or Righteousness of Jesus Christ to Believers Hearts? We are told, that those Coats were made of Skins of Beasts; and, as Beasts were no then Food for Men, we may fairly infer, that those Beasts were slain in Sacrifice, in Commemoration of the great Sacrifice Jesus Christ thereafter to be offered. And the Skins of those Beasts thus slain being put on Adam and Eve, they were hereby taught how

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their Nakedness was to be covered with the Righteousness of the Lamb of God.

This is it which is meant, when we are told, Abraham believed on the Lord, and it was counted to him for Righteousness. In short, this is it of which both the Law and all the Prophets have spoken, especially Jeremiah in the Words of the Text,—The Lord our Righteousness.——

I propose, thro' Divine Grace,

I. To consider who we are to understand by the Word *Lord*.

II. How the *Lord* is *Man's* Righteousness.

III. I'll consider some chief Objections that are generally urged against this Doctrine.

IV. I shall shew some very ill Consequences that flow naturally from denying this Doctrine.

V. Shall conclude with an Exhortation to all to come to Christ by Faith, that they may be enabled to say with the Prophet in the Text, The Lord our Righteousness.

I. I am to consider who we are to understand by the Word *Lord*.—The Lord our Righteousness.

And, if any Arians or Socinians are drawn by Curiosity to hear what the Babler has to say, let them be ashamed of denying the Divinity of that Lord that has bought poor Sinners by his precious Blood.—For the Person mentioned in the Text, under the Character of the Lord, is Jesus Christ.—

Behold, (ver. 5.) the Days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute Judgment and Justice in the Earth.

—In his Days (ver. 6.) Judah shall be saved,

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“and *Israel shall dwell safely*; and this is *his*
 “Name *whereby* he shall be called, “*The Lord*
 “*our Righteousness*.”—By the *righteous Branch*,
 all agree that we are to understand *Jesus Christ*.—
He it is that is called the *Lord* in our Text. If so,
 if there were no other Text in the Bible to prove
 the *Divinity* of Christ, *that* is sufficient: For,
 if the Word *Lord* may properly belong to *Jesus*
Christ, he *must* be God. For, as you have it in
 the *Margins* of your Bibles, the Word *Lord* is in
 the Original *Jehovah*, which is the *essential* Title
 of God himself. Come then, ye *Arians*, kiss the
 Son of God, bow down before him, and honour
him, even as you honour the *Father*. Learn of
 the *Angels*, those *Morning-stars*, and worship *him*
 as truly God:—For otherwise you are as much
Idolaters as those that worship the *Virgin Mary*.
 And as for you *Socinians*, who say Christ was a
mere Man, and yet profess that he was your *Savi-*
our, according to your own *Principles* you are ac-
 cursed. For, if Christ be a *mere Man*, then he is
 only an *Arm of Flesh*:—And it is written, *Cur-*
sed is he that *trusteth* on an *Arm of Flesh*.—But,
 I would hope, there are no such *Monsters* here;
 at least, that, after these *Considerations*, they
 would be *ashamed* of broaching such monstrous
Absurdities any more.—For it is plain, that, by
 the Word *Lord*, we are to understand the *Lord*
Jesus Christ, who here takes to himself the Title
 of *Jehovah*, and therefore must be *very God* of
very God; or, as the Apostle *devoutly* expresses it,
God blessed for evermore.

How the *Lord* is to be *Man's Righteousness*
 comes next to be considered;

And that is, in one Word, by *Imputation*.—For

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it pleased God, after he had made all Things by the Word of his Power, to create Man after his own Image. And so infinite was the Condescension of the high and lofty One, who inhabiteth Eternity, that, altho' he might have insisted on the everlasting Obedience of him and his Posterity, yet he was pleased to oblige himself, by a Covenant or Agreement made with his own Creatures, upon Condition of an unfinning Obedience, to give them Immortality and eternal Life. — For when it is said, “The Day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die;” we may fairly infer, so long as he continued obedient, and did not eat thereof, he should surely live. — The 3d of Genesis gives us a full, but mournful, Account, how our first Parents broke this Covenant, and thereby stood in need of a better Righteousness than their own, in order to procure their future Acceptance with God. — For what must they do? They were as much under a Covenant of Works, as ever. And tho', after their Disobedience, they were without Strength; yet they were obliged not only to do, but continue to do all Things, and that too in the most perfect Manner which the Lord had required of them: — And not only so, but to make Satisfaction to God's infinitely offended Justice for the Breach they had already been guilty of. — Here then opens the amazing Scene of Divine Philanthropy; — I mean God's Love to Man: — For behold, what Man could not do, Jesus Christ, the Son of his Father's Love, undertakes to do for him. And that God might be just in justifying the Ungodly, tho' he was in the Form of God, and therefore thought it no Robbery to be equal with God; yet he took upon him the Form of a Ser-

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want, even *human Nature*. — In *that Nature* he obeyed, and thereby fulfilled the whole *Moral Law* in our stead; — And also died a painful Death upon the *Cross*, and thereby became a *Curse* for, or instead of, those whom the *Father* had given him. — As God he satisfied, at the same Time that he obeyed and suffered as *Man*; and, being God and *Man* in one Person, wrought out a full, perfect and sufficient *Righteousness* for all to whom it was to be imputed.

Here then we see the *Meaning* of the Word *Righteousness*. It implies the *active* as well as *passive Obedience* of the Lord Jesus Christ. We generally, when talking of the *Merits* of Christ, only mention the latter, viz. — his *Death*; whereas the former, viz. his *Life* and *active Obedience*, is equally necessary. Christ is not such a Saviour as becomes us, unless we join both together. — Christ not only died, but lived; not only suffered, but obeyed, for or instead of poor Sinners. And both these jointly make up that compleat *Righteousness* which is to be imputed to us, as the *Disobedience* of our first Parents was made ours by *Imputation*. In this Sense, and no other, are we to understand that Parallel which the Apostle Paul draws, in the 5th of the *Romans*, between the first and second Adam. This is what he elsewhere terms our being made the *Righteousness* of God in him. This is the Sense wherein the Prophet would have us to understand the Words of the Text; therefore Chapter xxx. Verse 16. She, i. e. the Church itself shall be called (having this *Righteousness* imputed to her) the Lord our *Righteousness*. — A Passage, I think, worthy the profoundest Me-

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Meditation of all the Sons and Daughters of Abraham.

Many are the Objections which the proud Hearts of fallen Men are continually urging against this *wholesom*, this *divine*, this *soul-saving* Doctrine.-- I come now, in the *third* Place, to answer some few of those which I think the *most considerable*.

And first, they say, because they would appear *Friends to Morality*, "That the Doctrine of an *imputed Righteousness* is *destructive* of good *Works*, and leads to *Licentiousness*."

And *who*, pray, are the *Persons* that generally urge this Objection? Are they Men full of *Faith*, and Men *really concerned* for good Works? No; whatever few *Exceptions* there may be, if there be *any at all*, 'tis notorious they are generally Men of *corrupt Minds*, *reprobate concerning the Faith*. The *best Title* I can give them is, *that of profane Moralists*, or *Moralists falsely so called*. For I appeal to the *Experience* of the *present* as well as *past Ages*, if *Iniquity* did and does not *most abound* where the Doctrine of *Christ's whole personal Righteousness* is *most cried down*, and *most seldom mentioned*;—*Arminian* being *Antichristian Principles*, always did, and always will, lead to *Antichristian Practices*. And never was there a *Reformation* brought about in the *Church*, but by the *Preaching* the Doctrine of an *imputed Righteousness*.—This, as *that Man of God* (*Luther*) calls it, is *Articulus stantis aut Cadentis Ecclesiae*, the *Article by which the Church stands or falls*.—And tho' the *Preachers* of this Doctrine are generally *branded* by those on the *other Side* with the *opprobrious Names* of *Antinomians*, *Deceivers*, and what not? yet, I believe, if the *Truth* of the Do-

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ctrine on both Sides was to be judged of by the
Lives of the Preachers and Professors of it, their
on our Side the Question would have the Advan-
tage every way.

'Tis true, this, as well as every other Doctrine
of Grace, may be abused. And perhaps the un-
christian Walk of some, who have talked of Christ's
imputed Righteousness, Justification by Faith, and
the like, and yet never felt it imputed to their own
Souls, has given the Enemies of the Lord thus
Cause to blaspheme. But this is a very unsafe, as
well as a very unfair, way of arguing:—The only
Question should be, Whether or no this Doctrine
of an imputed Righteousness does in itself cut off
the Occasion of good Works, or lead to Licentious-
ness? No, in no wise. It excludes Works indeed
from being any Cause of our Justification in the
Sight of God;—But it requires good Works as a
Proof of our having this Righteousness imputed
to us, and as a declarative Evidence of our Justifi-
cation in the Sight of Men. And then, how can
the Doctrine of an imputed Righteousness be a
Doctrine leading to Licentiousness?

'Tis all Calumny.—The Apostle Paul intro-
duces an Infidel making this Objection in his Epistle
to the Romans;—And none but Infidels, that never
felt the Power of Christ's Resurrection upon their
Souls, will urge it over again:—And therefore,
notwithstanding this Objection, with the Prophet
in the Text we may boldly say, The Lord is our
Righteousness.

But Satan (and no wonder that his Servants
imitate him) often transforms himself into an Angel
of Light: And therefore (such perverse Things
will Infidelity and Arminianism make Men speak)

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in order to dress their Objections in the best Colours, some urge, "That our Saviour preached no such Doctrine;— That, in his Sermon upon the Mount, he mentions only *Morality*;" and consequently the Doctrine of an *imputed Righteousness* falls wholly to the Ground.—

But surely the Men, who urge this Objection, either never read, or never understood, our Lord's blessed Discourse, wherein the Doctrine of an *imputed Righteousness* is so plainly taught, that he that runs, if he has Eyes that see, may read.

Indeed our Lord does recommend *Morality* and good Works (as all faithful Ministers will do) and clears the moral Law from many corrupt Glosses put upon it by the letter-learned Pharisees.— But then, before he comes to this, 'tis remarkable, he talks of inward Piety, such as *Poverty of Spirit, Meekness, holy Mourning, Purity of Heart*,— especially *hungering and thirsting after Righteousness*; and then recommends good Works, as an Evidence of our having his *Righteousness* imputed to us, and these *Graces* and *Divine Tempers* wrought in our Hearts.— "Let your *Light* (that is, the *Divine Light* I before have been mentioning) shine before Men, in a *holy Life*; that they, seeing your good Works, may glorify your Father which is in Heaven."— And then immediately adds, "Think not that I am come to destroy the moral Law:— I came not to destroy, to take away the Force of it as a Rule of Life, but to fulfil; to obey it in its whole Latitude, and give the compleat Sense of it."— And then he goes on to shew how exceeding broad the moral Law is. So that our Lord, instead of *disanulling* of an *imputed Righteousness* in his Sermon upon the Mount,

not

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not only confirms it, but also answers the foregoing *Objection* urged against it, by making good *Works* a *Proof* and *Evidence* of its being imputed to our *Souls*.—He therefore that has *Ears* to hear, let him hear what the *Prophet* says in the *Words* of the *Text*,—"The *Lord* our *Righteousness*."

But as *Satan* not only quoted *Scripture*, but also backed one *Temptation* with it after another, when he attacked *Christ's Person* in the *Wilderness*; so his *Children* generally take the same *Method* in treating his *Doctrine*. And therefore they urge another *Objection* against the *Doctrine* of an imputed *Righteousness*, from the *Example* of the young *Man* in the *Gospel*.

We may state it thus:—"The *Evangelist Mark*, say they, *Chap. x.* mentions a young *Man* that came to *Christ*, running, and asking him what he should do to inherit *eternal Life*? *Christ*, say they, referred him to the *Commandments*, to know what he must do to inherit *eternal Life*. It is plain therefore, *Works* were to be, partly at least, the *Cause* of his *Justification*; and consequently the *Doctrine* of an imputed *Righteousness* is *unscriptural*."—This is the *Objection* in its full *Strength*; and little *Strength* in all its *Fullness*.—For, was I to prove the *Necessity* of an imputed *Righteousness*, I scarce know how I could bring a better *Instance* to make it good.

Let us take a more intimate *View* of this young *Man*, and our *Lord's Behaviour* towards him. *Mark x. 17.* the *Evangelist* tells us, "That, when *Christ* was gone forth into the *Way*, there came one running (it should seem it was some *Nobleman*; a *Rarity* indeed, to see such a one running to *Christ*!) and not only so, but he kneeled to him

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“ him (tho’ perhaps many of his Rank scarce knew
 “ the Time when they kneeled to Christ) and ask’d
 “ him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do,
 “ that I may inherit eternal Life? ” — Then Jesus,
 to see whether or not he believed him to be what he
 really was, truly properly God, said unto him,
 “ Why callest thou me Good? There is none good,
 “ but One, that is God.” — And, that he might
 directly answer his Question, says he, Thou knowest
 the Commandments: Do not commit Adultery, Do
 not bear false Witness, Defraud not, Honour thy
 Father and thy Mother. This, I say, was a direct
 Answer to his Question; namely, That Eternal
 Life was not to be attained by his Doings. — For
 our Lord, by referring him to the Commandments,
 did not (as the Objecters insinuate) in the least hint,
 that his Morality would recommend him to the
 Favour and Mercy of God: — But he intended
 thereby to make the Law his Schoolmaster to bring
 him to himself; that the young Man, seeing how
 he had broken every one of these Commandments,
 might thereby be convinced of the Insufficiency of
 his own, and consequently the absolute Necessity
 of looking out for a better Righteousness, where-
 on he might depend for Eternal Life.

This was what our Lord designed. — The young
 Man being self-righteous, and willing to justify
 himself, said, All these have I observed from my
 Youth. But, had he known himself, he would have
 confessed, All these have I broke from my Youth.
 — For, supposing he had not actually committed A-
 dultery, had he never lusted after a Woman in his
 Heart? What? if he had not really killed another,
 had he never been angry without a Cause, or spoken
 unadvisedly with his Lips? If so, by breaking one
 of

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of the *least* Commandments in the *least* Degree, he became liable to the Curse of God: For "Cursed" is he (saith the Law) that continueth not to do "all Things that are written in this Book."—And therefore, as I observed before, our Lord was so far from speaking against, that he treated the young Man in that Manner, on purpose to convince him of the Necessity of an imputed Righteousness.

But perhaps they will reply, It is said, "Jesus beholding him, loved him." And what then? Thus he might do with a human Love, and at the same Time this young Man have no Interest in his Blood.—Thus Christ is said to weep over Jerusalem, and say, —Oh that thou hadst known, &c." But such like Passages are to be referred only to his human Nature. And there is a great deal of Difference between the Love wherewith Christ loved this young Man, and that wherewith he loved Mary, Lazarus, and their Sister Martha.—To illustrate this by a Comparison;—A Minister of the Lord Jesus Christ, seeing many amiable Dispositions, such as a Readiness to bear the Word, a decent Behaviour at publick Worship, a Life outwardly spotless in many, cannot but so far love them; but then there is much Difference betwixt that Love which a Minister feels for such, and that Divine Love, that Union and Sympathy of Soul, which he feels for those that he is satisfied are really born again of God.—Apply this to our Lord's Case, as a faint Illustration of it.—Consider what has been said upon the young Man's Case in general, and then, if before you were fond of this Objection, instead of triumphing, with him, you will go sorrowful away.—Our Saviour's Reply to him more and more con-

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convinces us of the Truth of the Prophet's Assertion in the Text, viz. that the Lord is our Righteousness.

But there is a fourth and grand Objection yet behind, and that is taken from the 25th Chapter of Matthew, "where our Lord is described as rewarding People with eternal Life, because they fed the Hungry, clothed the Naked, and such like. Their Works therefore were a Cause of their Justification; consequently the Doctrine of imputed Righteousness is not agreeable to Scripture."

This I confess is the most plausible Objection that is brought against the Doctrine insisted on from the Text. And, in order that we may answer it in as clear and brief a Manner as may be, we confess, with the Article of the Church of England, That albeit good Works do not justify us, yet they will follow after Justification, as Fruits of it; and tho' they can claim no Reward in themselves, yet soasmuch as they spring from Faith in Christ, and a renewed Soul, they shall receive a Reward of Grace, tho' not of Debt; and consequently, the more we abound in such good Works, the greater will be our Reward when Jesus Christ shall come to Judgment."

Take these Considerations along with us, and they will help us much to answer the Objection now before us.—For thus Matthew,—*"Then shall the King say to them on his Right-hand, Come, ye blessed Children of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World.—For I was an hungred, and ye gave me Meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me Drink; I was a Stranger, and ye took me in; Naked,*
and

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"and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in Prison, and ye came unto me. I will therefore reward you, because you have done these Things out of Love to me, and here by have evidenced yourselves to be my true Disciples."—And that the People did not depend on these good Actions for their Justification in the Sight of God, is evident. "For when saw we thee an hungred, say they, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee Drink? When saw we thee a Stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in Prison, and came unto thee?"—*Language and Questions quite improper for Persons relying on their own Righteousness for Acceptance and Acquittance in the Sight of God.*

But then they reply against this, — "In the latter Part of the Chapter, say they, it is plain that Jesus Christ rejects and damns the others for not doing these Things. And therefore, if he damns those for not doing, he saves those for doing; and consequently the Doctrine of an imputed Righteousness is good for nothing."—*But that is no Consequence at all.*—For God may justly damn any Man for omitting the least Duty of the moral Law, and yet in himself is not obliged to give any one any Reward, supposing he has done all that he can. We are unprofitable Servants; we have done not near so much as it was our Duty to do, must be the Language of the most holy Souls living; and therefore, from or in ourselves, cannot be justified in the Sight of God.—This was the Frame of the devout Souls just now referred to.—Sensible of this, they were so far from depending on their Works for Justification in the Sight of God,

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God, that they were filled, *as it were*, with a *holy Blushing*, to think *our Lord* should condescend to *mention*, much more to *reward* them for, their poor *Works of Faith and Labours of Love*. I am persuaded *their Hearts* would rise with a *holy Indignation* against those who urge *this Passage* as an *Objection* against the Assertion of the Prophet in the Words of the *Text*, that the "*Lord is our Righteousness.*"—

Thus I think we have *fairly answered* these *grand Objections*, which are generally urged against the Doctrine of an *imputed Righteousness*.—Was I to stop here, I think I may say, We are made *more than Conquerors*, through *him* that loved us.—But there is a way of arguing which I have always admired, because I have thought always very convincing, viz. by shewing the *Absurdities* that will follow from denying any particular Proposition in Dispute.

This is the next Thing that was proposed.—
 "And never did greater or more *Absurdities* flow
 "from the denying any *Doctrine*, than will flow
 "from denying the Doctrine of *Christ's imputed*
 "*Righteousness.*"

And, first, if we deny *this Doctrine*, we turn the *Truth*, I mean, the *Word of God*, as much as we can, into a *Lie*, and utterly subvert all those Places of *Scripture* which say that we are *saved by Grace*; that it is *not of Works*, lest any *Man* should *boast*;—that *Salvation* is *God's free Gift*;—and that *he* that *glorieth*, must glory only in the *Lord*.—For, if the *whole personal Righteousness* of *Jesus Christ* be *not the sole Cause* of my *Acceptance* with *God*, if any *Work done by or foreseen in me* was in the *least* to be joined with it,
 or

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or looked upon by God as an inducing, *impulsive Cause* of acquitting my Soul from Guilt, then I have *somewhat* whereof I may glory in myself. Now *Boasting* is excluded in the great Work of our Redemption; but that cannot be, if we are *Enemies* to the Doctrine of an *imputed Righteousness*.—It would be *endless* to enumerate how many *Texts* of Scripture must be *false*, if *this* Doctrine be *not true*.—Let it suffice to affirm in the *general*, that, if we *deny* an *imputed Righteousness*, we may as well *deny* a *Divine Revelation* all at once:—For it is the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the *Beginning* and the *End* of the Book of God.—We must either *disbelieve* that, or *believe* what the *Prophet* hath spoken in the *Text*, *that the Lord is our Righteousness*.

But, *farther*,—I observed at the *Beginning* of this Discourse, that we are all *Arminians* and *Papists* by Nature:—For, as *one* observes, *Arminianism* is the *back Way* to Popery. And here I venture *further* to affirm, “That if we *deny* the “*Doctrine of an imputed Righteousness*, whatever “we may *style* ourselves, we are really *Papists* in “our *Hearts*, and *deserve* no other *Title* from “Men.”

Sirs, What *think* you?—Suppose I was to come and *tell* you, that you must *intercede* with *Saints*, for them to *intercede* with God for you;—Would you not then say I was *justly* reputed a *Popish Missionary* by some, and *deservedly* thrust out of the *Synagogues* by others?—I suppose you would. And *why*? Because you would say, The *Intercession* of Jesus Christ was *sufficient of itself*, without the *Intercession* of *Saints*; and that it was *blasphemous* to join *theirs* with *his*, as tho' it was *not sufficient*.

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Suppose I went a little more round about, and told you, that the *Death of Christ* was not sufficient, without our *Death* being added to it; that you must die as well as *Christ*, join your *Death* with his, and then it would be sufficient: — Might you not then, with a holy Indignation, throw Dust in the Air, and justly call me a Setter forth of strange Doctrines? And now then, if it be not only absurd, but blasphemous, to join the Intercession of Saints with the Intercession of *Christ*, as tho' his Intercession was not sufficient, or our *Death* with the *Death of Christ*, as tho' his *Death* was not sufficient; judge ye, if it be not equally absurd, equally blasphemous, to join our Obedience, either wholly or in part, with the Obedience of *Christ*, as if that was not sufficient. And, if so, what Absurdities will follow the denying that the Lord, both as to his active and passive Obedience, is our Righteousness?

One more Absurdity I shall mention, that will follow from the denying this Doctrine, and I have done.

I remember a Story of a certain Prelate, who, after many Arguments in vain urged to convince the *Earl of Rochester* of the invisible Realities of another World, took his Leave of his Lordship with some such Words as these: — “ Well, my Lord, says he, if there be no Hell, I am safe; but, if there should be such a thing, my Lord, as Hell, what will become of you ? ” I apply this to those that oppose the Doctrine now insisted on. If there be no such thing as the Doctrine of an imputed Righteousness, these that hold it, and bring forth Fruit unto Holiness, are safe; But if there be such a Thing, (as there certainly is)

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what

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what will become of you that deny it? It is no difficult Matter to determine. — Your Portion must be in the Lake of Fire and Brimstone for ever and ever. Since you will rely upon your Works, by your Works you shall be judged. — They shall be weighed in the Balance of the Sanctuary: — They will be found wanting. — By your Works therefore shall you be condemned; and you, being out of Christ, shall find God to your poor, wretched Souls, a consuming Fire. —

The great Stoddard of Northampton in New-England, has therefore well intitled a Book which he wrote (and which I would take this Opportunity to recommend) “*The Safety of Appearing in the Righteousness of Christ.*” — For why should I lean upon a broken Reed, when I can have the Rock of Ages to stand upon, that never can be moved?

And now, before I come to a more particular Application, give me Leave, in the Apostle's Language, triumphantly to cry out, Where is the Scribe? where the Disputer? where is the reasoning Infidel of this Generation? Can any thing appear more reasonable, even according to your own way of arguing, than the Doctrine here laid down? Have you not felt a convincing Power go along with the Word? Why then will you not believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, that so he may become the Lord your Righteousness?

But 'tis Time for me to come a little closer to your Consciences.

Brethren, tho' some may be offended at this Doctrine, and may account it Foolishness; yet, to many of you, I doubt not but it is precious, it being agreeable to the Form of sound Words, which
from

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from your *Infancy* has been delivered to you; And, coming from a *Quarter* you would least have expected it, may be received with more *Pleasure* and *Satisfaction*. But give me *Leave* to ask you one *Question*; Can you say, *The Lord our Righteousness*? — I say, the *Lord our Righteousness*. For entertaining *this Doctrine* in your *Heads*, without receiving the *Lord Jesus Christ* *savingly* by a *lively Faith* into your *Hearts*, will but increase your *Damnation*. — As I have often told you, so I tell you again, An *unapplied Christ* is *no Christ* at all. — Can you then, with believing *Thomas*, cry out, *My Lord and my God*? Is *Christ* your *Sanctification*, as well as your *outward Righteousness*? For the Word *Righteousness*, in the *Text*, not only implies *Christ's personal Righteousness* imputed to us, but also *Holiness* of *Heart* wrought in us. — These two *God* has joined together. — He never did, He never does, He never will put them *asunder*. — If you are justified by the *BLOOD*, you are also sanctified by the *Spirit* of our *Lord*. Can you then in *this Sense* say, *The Lord our Righteousness*? Were you ever made to *abhor yourselves* for your *actual and original Sins*, and to *lothe your own Righteousness* (or, as the *Prophet* beautifully expresses it, your *Righteousnesses*) as *filthy Rags*? Were you ever made to *see and admire the All-sufficiency* of *Christ's Righteousness*, and *excited by the Spirit of God* to *hunger and thirst* after it? Could you ever say, *My Soul is a-thirst for Christ*, yea, even for the *Righteousness* of *Christ*? Oh, when shall I come to appear before the *Presence of my God* in the *Righteousness* of *Christ*? Oh *nothing but Christ*! *nothing but Christ*! Give me *Christ*, O

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God,

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God, and I am *satisfied*! My Soul shall praise thee for ever. Was *this*, I say, ever the *Language* of your Hearts? — and, after *these inward Conflicts*, were you ever enabled to reach out the Arm of *Faith*, and embrace the *blessed Jesus* in your Souls, so that you could say, My Beloved is *mine*, and I am *his*? If so, fear not, whoever you are — Hail, all Hail, you happy Souls! The Lord, the Lord Christ, the everlasting God, is your Righteousness. — Christ has justified you, who is he that condemneth you? Christ has died for you, nay rather is risen again, and ever liveth to make *Intercession* for you. — Being now justified by his Grace, you have Peace with God, and shall, ere long, be with Jesus in Glory, reaping everlasting and unspeakable Redemption both in Body and Soul. — For there is no Condemnation to those that are really in Christ Jesus. Whether Paul or Apollos, or Life or Death, all is yours if you are Christ's, for Christ is God's? — Oh, my Brethren, my Heart is enlarged towards you! — Oh, think of the Love of Christ in dying for you! — If the Lord be your Righteousness, let the Righteousness of your Lord be continually in your Mouth. Talk of, oh talk of, and recommend the Righteousness of Christ, when you ly down, and when you rise up, at your going out and coming in! — Think of the Greatness of the Gift, as well as of the Giver! — Shew to all the World in Whom you have believed! — Let all by your Fruits know, that the Lord is your Righteousness, and that you are waiting for your Lord from Heaven! — Oh, study to be holy, even as He who has called you, and washed you in his own Blood, is holy! — Let not the Righteousness

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ousness of the Lord be evil spoken of through you. — Let not Jesus be wounded in the House of his Friends; but grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Day by Day. — Oh, think of his dying Love! Let that Love constrain you to Obedience! Having much forgiven, love much. Be always asking, *What shall I do*, to express my Gratitude to the Lord, for giving me his Righteousness? Let that Self-abasing, God-exalting Question be always in your Mouths; Oh, be always *lisp*ing out, *Why me, Lord? Why me?* Why am I taken, and others left? Why is the Lord my Righteousness? Why is he become my Salvation, who have so often deserved Damnation at his Hands?

Oh, my Friends, I trust I feel somewhat of a Sense of God's distinguishing Love upon my Heart; therefore I must divert a little from congratulating you, to invite poor Christless Sinners to come to him, and accept of his Righteousness, that they may have Life. —

Alas, my Heart almost bleeds! What a Multitude of precious Souls are now before me! How shortly must all be usher'd into Eternity! And yet, O cutting Thought! was God now to require all your Souls, how few, comparatively speaking, could really say, *The Lord our Righteousness!*

And think you, O Sinners, that you will be able to stand in the Day of Judgment, if Christ be not your Righteousness! No, that alone is the Wedding-garment in which you must appear. — Oh, Christless Sinners, I am distressed for you! — The Desires of my Soul are enlarged. — Oh that this may be an accepted Time! Oh that the Lord

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may be your Righteousness! — For *whither*
would you flee, if *Death* should find you *naked*? — Indeed there is no *hiding yourselves* from
his Presence. — The *pitiful Fig-leaves* of your
own Righteousness will not cover your *Nakedness*,
when God shall call you to stand before him. —
Adam found them *ineffectual*, and so will you. —
Oh think of *Death*! — Oh think of *Judg-*
ment! Yet a little while, and *Time* shall be no
more; and then *what* will become of you, if the
Lord be not your *Righteousness*? Think you that
Christ will spare you? — No, he that formed
you, will have no *Mercy* on you. If you are out
of *Christ*, if *Christ* be not your *Righteousness*,
Christ himself shall pronounce you *dammèd*. —
And can you bear to think of being *dammèd* by
Christ? Can you bear to hear the *Lord Jesus* say
to you, *Depart from me, ye Cursed*, into everlasting
Fire, prepared for the *Devil* and *his Angels*? Can
you live, think you, in everlasting *Burnings*? Is
your *Flesh Brass*, and your *Bones Iron*? What
if they are, *Hell-fire*, that *Fire* prepared for the
Devil and *his Angels*, will beat them through and
through? — And can you bear to depart from
Christ? Oh that *Heart-piercing Thought*! — Ask
those *holy Souls*, who are at any *Time* bewailing
an *absent God*, who walk in *Darkness*, and see no
Light, tho' but a few *Days* or *Hours*; ask them,
What it is to lose a Sight and Presence of Christ? —
See how they seek him *sorrowing*, and go *mourn-*
ing after him *all the Day long*! And, if it is so
dreadful to lose the *sensible Presence* of *Christ* on-
ly for a *Day*, what must it be to be *banished* from
him to all *Eternity*? — But thus it must be, if
Christ be not your *Righteousness*. — For God's *Ju-*
stice

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Justice must be satisfied; and, unless Christ's Righteousness is imputed and applied to you here, you must be satisfying the Divine Justice in Hell-torments eternally hereafter: -- Nay, as I said before, Christ himself, the God of Love, shall condemn you to that Place of Torment. -- And oh how cutting is that Thought! -- Methinks I see poor, trembling, christless Wretches, standing before the Bar of God, crying out, Lord, if we must be damned, let some Angel, or some Archangel, pronounce the damnatory Sentence: -- But all in vain. -- Christ himself shall pronounce the irrevocable Sentence. -- Knowing therefore the Terrors of the Lord, let me persuade you to close with Christ, and never rest till you can say, The Lord our Righteousness. -- Who knows but the Lord may have Mercy on, nay, abundantly pardon, you? -- Beg of God to give you Faith; -- and, if the Lord gives you that, you will by it receive Christ, with his Righteousness, and his All. You need not fear the Greatness or Number of your Sins. -- For are you Sinners? so am I. Are you the Chief of Sinners? so am I. Are you backsliding Sinners? so am I. And yet the Lord (for ever adored be his rich, free and sovereign Grace) the Lord is my Righteousness. -- Come then, O young Men, who (as I acted once myself) are playing the Prodigal, and wandering away afar off from your heavenly Father's House, Come home, come home, and leave your Swines Trough. -- Feed no longer on the Husks of sensual Delights: -- For Christ's Sake arise, and come home! -- Your heavenly Father now calls you. -- See yonder the best Robe, even the Righteousness of his dear Son, awaits you. -- See it, view it again and again. -- Consider at how dear

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a Rate it was purchased, even by the Blood of God.--- Consider *what great Need* you have of it.--- You are *lost, undone, damned for ever*, without it.--- Come then, *poor, guilty Prodigals*, come home.--- Indeed I will not, like the *elder Brother*, be angry; --- No, I will *rejoice* with the *Angels in Heaven*. And oh that God would now *bow the Heavens, and come down!* "Descend, O Son of God, descend; and, as thou hast shewn in me such Mercy, O let thy *blessed Spirit* apply thy *Righteousness* to some *young Prodigals* now before thee, and clothe their *naked Souls* with thy *best Robe!*"

But I must speak a Word to you, *young Maidens*, as well as *young Men*.--- I see *many* of you adorned, as to your *Bodies*.--- But are not your *Souls* naked? Which of you can say, The Lord is my *Righteousness*? Which of you was ever *solicitous* to be dressed in this *Robe* of *invaluable Price*, and without which you are no better than *whited Sepulchres* in the Sight of God?--- Let not then *so many* of you, *young Maidens*, any longer forget your *only Ornament*.--- Oh seek for the Lord to be your *Righteousness*, or otherwise *Burning* will soon be upon you, instead of *Beauty!*

And what shall I say to you of a *middle Age*, you *busy Merchants*, you *cumber'd Martha's*, who, with all your *Gettings*, have not yet gotten the Lord to be your *Righteousness*? Alas! what *Profit* will there be of all your *Labour* under the Sun, if you do not secure this *Pearl* of *invaluable Price*? this one Thing, so *absolutely needful*, that it only can stand you in stead, when all other Things shall be taken from you. Labour therefore no longer so anxiously for the *Meat* which *perisheth*, but henceforward

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forward seek for the Lord to be your Righteousness, — a Righteousness that will entitle you to Life everlasting. — I see also many hoary Heads here, and perhaps the most of them cannot say, The Lord is my Righteousness. — O gray-headed Sinners, I could weep over you! — Your gray Hairs, which ought to be your Crown, and in which perhaps you glory, are now your Shame. — You know not that the Lord is your Righteousness. — Oh haste then, haste ye, aged Sinners, and seek an Interest in Redeeming Love! — Alas, you have one Foot already in the Grave — Your Glass is just run out — Your Sun is just going down, and it will set and leave you in an eternal Darkness, unless the Lord be your Righteousness! — Flee then, oh flee for your Lives! Be not afraid. — All Things are possible with God. If you come, tho' it be at the eleventh Hour, Christ Jesus will in no wise cast you out. Oh seek then for the Lord to be your Righteousness, and beseech him to let you know how it is that a Man may be born again when he is old! — But I must not forget the Lambs of the Flock, — To feed them was one of my Lord's last Commands. — I know he will be angry with me, if I do not tell them, that the Lord may be their Righteousness; and that of such is the Kingdom of Heaven. — Come then, ye little Children, come to Christ; the Lord Christ shall be your Righteousness. — Do not think, that you are too young to be converted. — Perhaps many of you may be Nine or Ten Years old, and yet cannot say, The Lord is our Righteousness; which many have said, tho' younger than you. — Come then, while you are young. — Perhaps you may not live to be old. — Do not stay for other People. — If your Fathers and Mothers will not come to Christ, do
you

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you come without them.— Let *Children* lead them, and *show them how the Lord* may be *their Righteousness.*— Our Lord *Jesus* loved *little Children.*— You are his *Lambs*;—He bids me *feed you.*—I pray God make you *willing betimes* to take the *Lord* for *your Righteousness.*

Here then I could *conclude*;—but I must not forget the *poor Negroes*:—No, I *must not.* *Jesus Christ* has *died for them*, as well as *others.*—Nor do I mention you *last*, because I *despise your Souls*, but because I would have what I have to say, make the *deeper Impression* upon your *Hearts.*—Oh that you would seek the *Lord* to be *your Righteousness!*—Who knows but he *may be found of you?*—For in *Jesus Christ* there is neither *Male or Female, Bond or Free*; even you may be the *Children of God*, if you believe in *Jesus.*—Did you never read of the *Eunuch* belonging to the *Queen of Candace!*—a *Negro like yourselves.*—He *believed.*—The *Lord* was *his Righteousness.* He was *baptized.* Do you *also believe*, and you shall be *saved.*—*Christ Jesus* is the same *now* as he was *Yesterday*, and will wash you in his *own Blood.*-- Go home then, turn the *Words of the Text* into a *Prayer*, and intreat the *Lord* to be *your Righteousness.*—*Even so, come Lord Jesus, come quickly, into all our Souls!* Amen, *Lord Jesus, Amen and Amen!*

SER.

27
SERMON II.

The Seed of the Woman, and the
Seed of the Serpent.

GENESIS iii. 15.

*And I will put Enmity between thee and
the Woman, and between thy Seed and
her Seed; it shall bruise thy Head,
and thou shalt bruise his Heel.*

WHEN I read to you these Words, I may address you in the Language of the Holy Angels to the Shepherds, that were watching their Flocks by Night; "*Behold, I bring you glad Tidings of great Joy.*"--- For this is the first Promise that was made of a Saviour to the apostate Race of *Adam*.--- We generally look for Christ only in the New Testament; but Christianity, in one Sense, is very near as old as the Creation.--- It is wonderful to observe how gradually God revealed his Son to Mankind. He began with the Promise in the Text, and this the Elect lived upon till the Time of *Abraham*.--- To him God made further Discoveries of his eternal Counsel concerning Man's Redemption.--- Afterwards, at sundry Times, and in divers Manners, God spoke to the Fathers by the Prophets, till at length the **LORD JESUS** *himself* was manifested in the Flesh, and came and tabernacled amongst us.

This first Promise must certainly be but dark to our first Parents, in comparison of that great
Light

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Light which we enjoy : And yet, dark as it was, we may assure ourselves they built upon it their Hopes of everlasting Salvation, and by that Faith were saved.

How they came to stand in need of this Promise, and what is the Extent and Meaning of it, I intend, God willing, to make the Subject-matter of your present Meditation.

The Fall of Man is written in too legible Characters not to be understood : — Those that deny it, by their denying, prove it. — The very Heathens confess'd and bewailed it : — They could see the Streams of Corruption running through the whole Race of Mankind, but could not trace them to the Fountain-head. — Before God gave a Revelation of his Son, Man was a Riddle to himself. — And *Moses* unfolds more, in this one Chapter (out of which the Text is taken) than all Mankind could have been capable of finding out of themselves, tho' they had studied to all Eternity.

In the foregoing Chapter, he had given us a full Account, how God spoke the World into Being ; and especially how he formed Man of the Dust of the Earth, and breathed into him the Breath of Life, so that he became a living Soul. — A Council of the Trinity was called concerning the Formation of this lovely Creature. — The Result of that Council was, *Let us make Man in our Image, after our Likeness.* — “ *So God created Man in his own Image, in the Image of God created he him.* ” — *Moses* remarkably repeats these Words, that we might take particular Notice of our Divine Original. — Never was so much express'd in so few Words : — None but a Man inspired could have done so. But it is remarkable, that

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that tho' *Moses* mentions our being made in the *Image of God*, yet he mentions it but twice, and that, as it were, in a transient Manner; as tho' he would have said, "Man was made in Honour, God made him upright, in the *Image of God*, Male and Female created he them. But Man so soon fell, and became like the Beasts that perish, nay, like the Devil himself, that it is scarce worth mentioning."

How soon Man fell after he was created, is not told us; and therefore, to fix any Time, is to be wise above what is written.— And, I think, they who suppose that Man fell the same Day in which he was made, have no sufficient Ground for their Opinion.— The many Things which are crowded together in the former Chapter, such as the Formation of *Adam's* Wife, his giving Names to the Beasts, and his being put into the Garden which God had planted, I think require a longer Space of Time than a Day to be transacted in.— However, all agree in this, "Man stood not long." How long, or how short a while, I will not take upon me to determine.— It more concerns us to enquire, how he came to fall from his Steadfastness, and what was the Rise and Progress of the Temptation which prevailed over him.— The Account given us in this Chapter concerning it, is very full; and it may do us much Service, under God, to make some Remarks upon it.

"Now the Serpent (says the sacred Historian) was more subtle than any Beast of the Field which the LORD God had made; and he said unto the Woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every Tree of the Garden?"

Tho' this was a real Serpent, yet he that spoke
was

was no other than the Devil ; from hence, perhaps, called the old Serpent, because he took Possession of the Serpent when he came to beguile our first Parents.— The Devil envied the Happiness of Man, who was made, as some think, to supply the Place of the fallen Angels.— God made Man upright, and with full Power to stand if he would ;— He was just, therefore, in suffering him to be tempted.— If he fell, he had no one to blame except himself.— But how must *Satan* effect his Fall ?— He cannot do it by his Power, he attempts it therefore by Policy :— He takes Possession of a Serpent, which was more subtile than all the Beasts of the Field, which the Lord God had made ; so that Men that are full of Subtilty, but have no Piety, are only Machines for the Devil to work upon, just as he pleases.

“ *And he said unto the Woman.*”— Here is an Instance of his Subtilty.— He says unto the Woman, the weaker Vessel, and when she was alone from her Husband, and therefore was more liable to be overcome,— “ *Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every Tree of the Garden ?* ” These Words are certainly spoken in Answer to something which the Devil either saw or heard.— In all Probability, the Woman was now near the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil ; (for we shall find her, by and by, plucking an Apple from it) perhaps she might be looking at, and wondering what there was in that Tree more than the others, that she and her Husband should be forbidden to taste of it.— *Satan* seeing this, and coveting to draw her into a Parley with him, (for if the Devil can persuade us not to resist, but to commune with him, he hath gained a great Point) he says, “ *Yea, hath God*
“ *said,*

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"said, *Ye shall not eat of every Tree in the Garden?*"—The first Thing he does is to persuade her, if possible, to entertain hard Thoughts of God;—This is his general Way of dealing with God's Children:—"Yea, says he, hath God said, *Ye shall not eat of every Tree of the Garden?*" "What! hath God planted a Garden, and placed you in the Midst of it, only to teaze and perplex you? hath he planted a Garden, and yet forbid you making Use of any of the Fruits of it at all?" It was impossible for him to ask a more insnaring Question, in order to gain his End: For Eve was here seemingly obliged to answer, and vindicate God's Goodness. And therefore,—

Verse 2. The Woman said unto the Serpent, "*We may eat of the Fruit of the Trees of the Garden: But (Ver. 3.) of the Fruit of the Tree which is in the Midst of the Garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.*"

The former Part of the Answer was good, "We may eat of the Fruit of the Trees of the Garden, God has not forbid us eating of every Tree of the Garden. No; we may eat of the Fruit of the Trees in the Garden (and, it should seem, even of the Tree of Life, which was as a Sacrament to Man in a State of Innocence) there is only one Tree in the Midst of the Garden, of which God hath said, *Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.*"—Here she begins to warp, and Sin begins to conceive in her Heart. Already she has contracted some of the Serpent's Poison, by talking with him, which she ought not to have done at all. For she might easily suppose, that it could be no good Being, that could
put

put such a Question unto her, and insinuate such dishonourable Thoughts of God.--- She should therefore have fled from him, and not stood to have parleyed with him at all.--- Immediately the ill Effects of it appear, she begins to soften the Divine Threatning.--- God had said, *The Day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die*; or, *dying thou shalt die*.--- But *Eve* says, *Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die*.--- We may be assured we are fallen into, and begin to fall by Temptation, when we begin to think God will not be as good as his Word, in respect to the Execution of his Threatnings denounced against Sin.---*Satan* knew this, and therefore artfully

“ Said unto the Woman (*ver. 4.*) *Ye shall not surely die,*” in an insinuating Manner, “ *Ye shall not surely die.* --- Surely, God will not be so cruel as to damn you only for eating an Apple, it cannot be.”--- Alas! how many does *Satan* lead captive at his Will, by flattering them, that they shall not surely die; --- That Hell-torments will not be eternal; --- That God is all Mercy; --- That he therefore will not punish a few Years Sin with an Eternity of Misery? --- But *Eve* found God as good as his Word; and so will all they that go on in Sin, under a false Hope that they shall not surely die.

We may also understand the Words spoken positively, and this is agreeable to what follows; --- You shall not surely die; --- “ It is all a Delusion, a mere Bugbear, to keep you in a servile Subjection.”

For (*ver. 4.*) “ *God doth know, that in the Day ye eat thereof, then shall your Eyes be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing Good and Evil.*”

What

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What Child of God can expect to escape Slander, when God himself was thus slandered even in *Paradise*? Surely the Understanding of *Eve* must have been, in some Measure, blinded, or she would not have suffered the Tempter to speak such perverse Things.---In what odious Colours is God here represented! "God doth know, that in the " Day ye eat thereof, ye shall be as gods," (equal with God.) So that the grand Temptation was, that they should be hereafter under no Controul, equal, if not superior, to God that made them, knowing Good and Evil.---*Eve* could not tell what *Satan* meant by this; but, to be sure, she understood it of some great Privilege which they were to enjoy.---And thus *Satan* now points out a Way which seems right to Sinners, but does not tell them the End of that Way is Death.

To give Strength and Force to this Temptation, in all Probability, *Satan*, or the Serpent, at this Time plucked an Apple from the Tree, and ate it before *Eve*;---by which *Eve* might be induced to think, that the Sagacity and Power of Speech, which the Serpent had above the other Beasts, must be owing, in a great Measure, to his eating that Fruit; and, therefore, if he received so much Improvement, she might also expect a like Benefit from it. All this, I think, is clear;---for, otherwise, I do not see with what Propriety it could be said, "*When the Woman saw that it was good for Food.*"---How could she know it was good for Food, unless she had seen the Serpent feed upon it?

Satan now begins to get Ground apace.---Lust had conceived in her Heart; shortly it will bring forth Sin.---Sin being conceived, brings forth

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Death. --- Ver. 6. "*And when the Woman saw that the Tree was good for Food, and that it was pleasant to the Eyes, and a Tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the Fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her Husband, and he did eat.*"

Our Senses are the landing Ports of our spiritual Enemies. --- How needful is that Resolution of holy *Job*, *I have made a Covenant with mine Eyes!* When *Eve* began to gaze on the forbidden Fruit with her Eyes, she soon began to long after it with her Heart. --- When she saw that it was good for Food, and pleasant to the Eyes (here was the Lust of the Flesh, and Lust of the Eye) but, above all, a Tree to be desired to make one wise, wiser than God would have her be, nay, as wise as God himself; she took of the Fruit thereof, and gave also unto her Husband with her, and he did eat. --- As soon as ever she sinned herself, she turned Tempter to her Husband. --- 'Tis dreadful, when those, who should be Help-meets for each other in the great Work of their Salvation, are only Promoters of each other's Damnation: --- But thus it is. If we ourselves are good, we shall excite others to Goodness; if we do Evil, we shall entice others to do Evil also. --- There is a close Connection between Doing and Teaching. --- How needful then is it for us all to take heed that we do not sin any way ourselves, lest we should become Factors for the Devil, and insnare, perhaps, our nearest and dearest Relatives? "*She gave also unto her Husband with her, and he did eat.*"

Alas! what a Complication of Crimes was there in this one single Act of Sin! --- Here is an utter Disbelief of God's Threatning; --- The utmost In-

gratitude

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gratitude to their Maker, who had so lately planted this Garden, and placed them in it, with such a glorious and comprehensive Charter.---Here's the utmost Neglect of their Posterity, who they knew were to stand or fall with them.---Here was the utmost Pride of Heart:---They wanted to be equal with God.---Here's the utmost Contempt put upon his Threatning and his Law:---The Devil is credited and obeyed before him, and all this only to satisfy their sensual Appetite. Never was a Crime of such a complicated Nature committed by any here below:---Nothing but the Devil's Apostasy and Rebellion could equal it.

And what are the Consequences of their Disobedience?---Are their Eyes opened?---Yes, their Eyes are opened;---But, alas! it is only to see their own Nakedness. For we are told (*ver. 7.*)

"That the Eyes of them both were opened, and

"they knew that they were naked."---Naked of

God, naked of every Thing that was holy and good,---and destitute of the Divine Image, which

they before enjoyed.---They might rightly now be

termed *Ichabod*; for the Glory of the Lord departed from them.---Oh how low did these Sons

of the Morning then fall! out of God into them-

selves; from being Partakers of the Divine Na-

ture, into the Nature of the Devil and the Beast.---

Well, therefore, might they know that they were

naked, not only in Body, but in Soul.---

And how do they behave now they are naked?---

Do they flee to God for pardon?---Do they seek to

God for a Robe to cover their Nakedness?---No.

They were now dead to God, earthly, sensual, devi-

lish.---And therefore, instead of applying to God

for Mercy, they *sewed or platted Fig-leaves to-*

gether, and made themselves Aprons, or Things to

gird

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gird about them. This is a lively Representation of all natural Men: -- We see that we are naked. -- We, in some Measure, confess it; but, instead of looking up to God for Succour, we patch up a Righteousness of our own (as our first Parents platted Fig-leaves together) hoping to cover our Nakedness by that. -- But our Righteousness will not stand the Severity of God's Judgment: It will do us no more Service than the Fig-leaves did *Adam* and *Eve*, -- that is, none at all.

For (*Ver. 8.*) "*They heard the Voice of the Lord God walking in the Trees of the Garden, in the Cool of the Day; and Adam and his Wife (notwithstanding their Fig-leaves) hid themselves from the Presence of the Lord God, among the Trees of the Garden.*"

They heard the *Voice* of the Lord God, or the *Word* of the Lord God, even the Lord Jesus Christ, who is *the Word that was with God, and the Word that was God.* -- They heard him walking in the Trees of the Garden, in the *Cool of the Day*; -- A Season, perhaps, when *Adam* and *Eve* used to go, in an especial Manner, and offer up an Evening-sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving. -- *The Cool of the Day.* Perhaps, the Sin was committed early in the Morning, or at Noon; -- But God would not come upon them immediately. -- He staid till the Cool of the Day. For, if we would effectually reprove others, we should not do it when they are warmed with Passion, but wait till the Cool of the Day. --

But what an Alteration is here! -- Instead of rejoicing at the Voice of their Beloved, -- instead of meeting him with open Arms and enlarged Hearts, as before, they now hide themselves in the

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the Trees of the Garden.— Alas, what a foolish Attempt was this?— Surely they must be naked, otherwise how could they think of hiding themselves from God?— Whither could they flee from his Presence?— But, by their Fall, they had contracted an Enmity against God: They now hated, and were afraid to converse with, God their Maker.— And is not this our Case by Nature? assuredly it is. We labour to cover our Nakedness with the Fig-leaves of our own Righteousness:— We hide ourselves from God as long as we can, and will not come, and never should come, did not the Father prevent, draw and sweetly constrain us by his Grace, as he here prevented *Adam*.

Ver. 9. "And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Adam, where art thou?"

"The Lord God called unto *Adam*" (for otherwise *Adam* would never have called unto the Lord God) and said, "*Adam, where art thou?*"—

How is it that thou comest not to pay thy Devotions as usual?— Christians, remember the Lord keeps an Account when you fail coming to Worship.— Whenever therefore you are tempted to withhold your Attendance, each of you fancy you

heard the Lord God calling unto you, and saying,

"O Man, O Woman, where art thou?"— It may be understood in another and better Sense;—

"*Adam, where art thou?*"— What a Condition is thy poor Soul in?— This is the first Thing the

Lord asks and convinces a Sinner of; when he prevents and call him effectually by his Grace,—

he also calls him by Name: For unless God speaks to us in particular, and we know where we

are, how poor, how miserable, how blind, how naked, we shall never value the Redemption

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wrought out for us by the Death and Obedience of the dear Lord Jesus.—*Adam, where art thou?*

Ver. 10. "And he said, I heard thy Voice in the Garden, and I was afraid."— See what Cowards Sin makes us.— If we knew no Sin, we should know no Fear. "*Because I was naked, and I hid myself.*"— *Ver. 11. "And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the Tree, whereof I (thy Maker and Law-giver) commanded thee, that thou shouldst not eat?"*

God knew very well that *Adam* was naked, and that he had eaten of the forbidden Fruit. -- But God would know it from *Adam's* own Mouth.--- Thus God knows all our Necessities before we ask, but yet insists upon our asking for his Grace, and confessing our Sins. -- For, by such Acts, we acknowledge our Dependence upon God, take Shame to ourselves, and thereby give Glory to his great Name.

Ver. 12. "And the Man said, The Woman which thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the Tree, and I did eat."

Never was Nature more lively delineated.— See what Pride *Adam* contracted by the Fall! How unwilling he is to lay the Blame upon, or take Shame to himself.— This Answer is full of Insolence towards God, Enmity against his Wife, and Disingenuity in respect to himself. For herein he tacitely reflects upon God.— *The Woman that thou gavest to be with me.*— As much as to say, *If thou hadst not given me THAT WOMAN, I had not eaten the forbidden Fruit.*— Thus, when Men sin, they lay the Fault upon their Passions; then blame and reflect upon God for giving them those Passions.

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Passions.—Their Language is, — “The Appetites
 “ that THOU gavest us, they deceived us; and
 “ therefore we sinned against thee.”— But, as God,
 notwithstanding, punished *Adam* for hearkning
 to the Voice of his Wife, so he will punish those
 who hearken to the Dictates of their corrupt Inclina-
 tions: -- For God compels no Man to Sin. *Adam*
 might have withstood the Solicitations of his Wife,
 if he would. And so, if we look up to God, we
 should find Grace to help in the Time of Need.—
 The Devil and our own Hearts tempt, but they
 cannot force us to consent, without the Concur-
 rence of our own Wills. So that our Damnation
 is of ourselves, as it will evidently appear at the
 Great Day, notwithstanding all Mens present im-
 pudent Replies against God.—As *Adam* speaks in-
 solently in respect to God, so he speaks with En-
 mity against his Wife; -- The Woman, or *this Wo-*
man, she gave me.— He lays all the Fault upon
 her, and speaks of her with much Contempt.—
 He does not say, My Wife, my dear Wife; but,
This Woman.— For Sin disunites the most united
 Hearts: It is the Bane of holy Fellowship.—
 Those who have been Companions in Sin here, if
 they die without Repentance, will both hate and
 condemn one another hereafter.— All damned
 Souls are Accusers of their Brethren.— Thus it is,
 in some Degree, on this Side the Grave.— “*The*
 “ *Woman whom THOU gavest to be with me, she*
 “ *gave me of the Tree, and I did eat.*”— What
 a disingenuous Speech was here! -- He makes use
 of no less than fifteen Words to excuse himself,
 and but one or two (in the Original) to confess
 his Fault, if it may be called a Confession at all.—
 “*The Woman which thou gavest to be with me,*
 “ *she*

"He gave me of the Tree,"—Here are fifteen Words; *"and I did eat."*—With what Reluctance do these last Words come out? How soon are they utter'd? *"And I did eat."* But thus it is, with an unhumbled, unregenerate Heart:—It will be laying the Fault upon the dearest Friend in the World, nay, upon God himself, rather than take Shame to itself.—This Pride we are all subject to by the Fall; and, till our Hearts are broken, and made contrite by the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be always charging God foolishly.—*Against THEE, and THEE only, have I sinned, that thou mightst be justified in thy Saying, and clear when thou art judged,* is the Language of none but those who, like David, are willing to confess their Faults, and are truly sorry for their Sins.—This was not the Case of Adam:—His Heart was not broken; and therefore he lays the Fault of his Disobedience upon his Wife and God, and not upon himself;—*"The Woman which THOU gavest to be with me, she gave me of the Tree, and I did eat."*—

Ver. 13. *"And the Lord God said, What is this that thou hast done?"*—What a wonderful Concern does God express in this Expostulation!—*"What a Deluge of Misery hast thou brought upon thyself, thy Husband, and thy Posterity? What is this that thou hast done? Disobeyed thy God, obeyed the Devil, and ruined thy Husband, for whom I made thee to be an Help-meet!—What is this that thou hast done?"*—God would here awaken her to a Sense of her Crime and Danger, and therefore, as it were, thunders in her Ears: For the Law must be preached to self-righteous Sinners.—We must take care
of

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of healing before we see Sinners wounded, lest we should say, *Peace, Peace*, where there's *no Peace*.--- Secure Sinners must hear the Thundrings of Mount *Sinai*, before we bring them to Mount *Sion*.--- They who never preach up the Law, 'tis to be feared, are unskillful in delivering the glad Tidings of the Gospel. Every Minister should be a *Boanerges*, a *Son of Thunder*, as well as a *Barnabas*, a *Son of Consolation*. There was an Earthquake and a Whirlwind, before the small still Voice came to *Elijah* :--- We must first shew People they are condemn'd, and then shew them how they must be saved. But how and when to preach the Law, and when to apply the Promises of the Gospel, Wisdom is profitable to direct.--- "*And the Lord God said unto the Woman, What is this that thou hast done ?*"---

"*And the Woman said, The Serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.*" She does not make use of so many Words to excuse herself, as her Husband ; but her Heart is as unhumbl'd as his.--- What is this, says God, that thou hast done ? God here charges her with doing it.--- She dares not deny the Fact, or say, I have not done it ; but she takes all the Blame off herself, and lays it upon the Serpent ;--- "*The Serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.*"--- She does not say, " Lord, I was to blame " for talking with the Serpent ;--- Lord, I did " wrong, in not hasting to my Husband, when he " put the first Question to me ;--- Lord, I plead " guilty, I only am to blame,--- Oh let not my " poor Husband suffer for my Wickedness !"--- This would have been the Language of her Heart, had she now been a true Penitent. But both were now alike proud ;--- therefore neither will lay the
Blame

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Blame upon themselves :--- "*The Serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.--- The Woman which thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the Tree, and I did eat.*"---

I have been the more particular in remarking this Part of their Behaviour, because it tends so much to the magnifying of *Free Grace*, and plainly shews us Salvation cometh only from the Lord.--- Let us take a short View of the miserable Circumstances our first Parents were now in :--- They were legally and spiritually dead,--- Children of Wrath, and Heirs of Hell.--- They had eaten the Fruit, of which God had commanded them, that they should not eat ;--- And when arraigned before God, notwithstanding their Crime was so complicated, they could not be brought to confess it.--- What Reason can be given, why Sentence of Death should not be pronounced against the Prisoners at the Bar ?--- All must own they are worthy to die. Nay, how can God, consistently with his Justice, possibly forgive them ?--- He had threatned, that the Day wherein they eat of the forbidden Fruit, they should *surely die* ;--- And, if he did not execute this Threatning, the Devil might then slander the Almighty indeed. And yet Mercy cries, Spare these Sinners, spare the Work of thine own Hands.--- Behold, then, Wisdom contrives a Scheme how God may be just, and yet be merciful ; be faithful to his Threatning, punish the Offence, and at the same Time spare the Offender.--- An amazing Scene of Divine Love here opens to our View, which had been from all Eternity hid in the Heart of God !--- Notwithstanding *Adam* and *Eve* were thus unhumbled, and did not so much as put up one single Petition for Pardon, God immediately passes

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passes Sentence upon the Serpent, and reveals to them a Saviour. —

Ver. 14. "And the Lord God said unto the Serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art accursed above all Cattle, and above every Beast of the Field; upon thy Belly shalt thou go, and Dust shalt thou eat all the Days of thy Life."

i. e. he should be in Subjection, and his Power should always be limited and restrained. — His Enemies shall lick the very Dust, says the Psalmist. — (Ver. 15.) "And I will put Enmity between thee and the Woman, and between thy Seed and her Seed: It shall bruise thy Head, and thou shalt bruise his Heel." —

Before I proceed to the Explanation of this Verse, I cannot but take Notice of one great Mistake which the Author of the *Whole Duty of Man* is guilty of, in making this Verse contain a Covenant between God and Adam, as tho' God personally treated with Adam as before the Fall. For, talking of the second Covenant in his Preface concerning *caring for the Soul*, says he, "This second Covenant was made with Adam, and us in him, presently after the Fall, and is briefly contained in these Words, — Gen. iii. 15. where God declares, *The Seed of the Woman shall break the Serpent's Head*; and this was made up, as the first was, of some Mercies to be afforded by God, and some Duties to be performed by us." — This is exceeding false Divinity: — For these Words are not spoken to Adam, — they are directed only to the Serpent. — Adam and Eve stood by as Criminals, and God could not treat with them, because they had broken his Covenant. And it is so far from being a Cove-

nant

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nant wherein "some Mercies are to be afforded
 "by God, and some Duties to be performed by
 "us," that here is not a Word looking that
 Way;--- 'Tis only a Declaration of a free Gift of
 Salvation thro' Jesus Christ our Lord.--- God the
 Father and God the Son had entred into a Cove-
 nant concerning the Salvation of the Elect from all
 Eternity, wherein God the Father promised, That,
 if the Son would offer his Soul a Sacrifice for
 Sin, he should see his Seed.--- Now this is an
 open Revelation of this secret Covenant, and there-
 fore God speaks in the most positive Terms, *It*
shall bruise thy Head, and thou shalt bruise his
Heel.--- The first *Adam* God had treated with
 before;--- He proved false:--- God therefore, to
 secure the second Covenant from being broken,
 puts it into the Hands of the second *Adam*, the
 Lord from Heaven.--- *Adam*, after the Fall, stood
 no longer as our Representative;--- He and *Eve*
 were only private Persons, as we are, and were
 only to lay hold on the Declaration of Mercy con-
 tained in this Promise by Faith (as they really
 did) and by that they were saved.--- I do not say,
 but we are to believe and obey, if we are ever-
 lastingly saved.--- Faith and Obedience are Con-
 ditions, if we only mean that they in Order go
 before our Salvation; but I deny that these are
 proposed by God to *Adam*, or that God treats
 with him in this Promise, as he did before the
 Fall under the Covenant of Works. For how
 could that be, when *Adam* and *Eve* were now
 Prisoners at the Bar, without Strength to perform
 any Conditions at all?--- The Truth is this,---
 God, as a Reward of Christ's Sufferings, promi-
 sed to give the Elect Faith and Repentance, in
 order

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order to bring them to eternal Life :— And both these, and every Thing else necessary for their everlasting Happiness, are infallibly secured to them in this Promise ; as Mr. *Boston*, an excellent Scots Divine, sweetly and clearly shews, in a Book intituled, “ *A View of the Covenant of Grace.*” —

This is by no means an unnecessary Distinction ; --- 'Tis a Matter of great Importance : --- For want of knowing this, People have been so long misled.--- They have been taught that they must do so and so, as tho' they were under a Covenant of Works, and then for DOING this they should be saved. — This is plainly the whole Drift of the Book wrongly intituled, *The Whole Duty of Man.*--- Whereas, on the contrary, People should be taught, That the Lord Jesus was the second *Adam*, with whom the Father entered into Covenant for fallen Man ;--- That they can now do nothing of or for themselves, and should therefore come to God, beseeching him to give them Faith, by which they shall be enabled to lay hold on the Righteousness of Christ ; and that Faith they will shew forth by their Works, out of Love and Gratitude to the ever-blessed Jesus, their most glorious Redeemer, for what he has done for their Souls.--- This is a consistent scriptural Scheme : Without holding this, we must run into one of those two bad Extremes, I mean, *Antinomianism* on the one Hand, or *Arminianism* on the other ;--- From both which may the good Lord deliver us ! —

But to proceed : By the *Seed of the Woman*, we are here to understand the Lord Jesus Christ, who, tho' very God of very God, was, for us
Men

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Men and our Salvation, to have a Body prepared for him by the Holy Ghost, and to be born of a Woman who never knew Man, and by his Obedience and Death make an Atonement for Man's Transgression, and bring in an everlasting Righteousness, work in them a new Nature, and thereby bruise the Serpent's Head, *i. e.* destroy his Power and Dominion over them.--- By the *Serpent's Seed*, we are to understand the Devil and all his Children, who should be permitted by God to tempt and sift His Children. But, blessed be God, he can reach no further than our Heel.---

'Tis not to be doubted but *Adam* and *Eve* understood this Promise in this Sense; for 'tis plain, in the latter Part of the Chapter, Sacrifices were instituted.--- For, from whence should those Skins come, but from Beasts slain for Sacrifice, of which God made them Coats?--- We find also *Abel*, as well as *Cain*, offering Sacrifice in the next Chapter: And the Apostle tells us, he did it *by Faith*, no doubt in this Promise.--- And *Eve*, when *Cain* was born, said, *I have gotten a Man from the LORD*, or, (as Mr. Henry observes, it may be render'd) *I have gotten a Man*--- THE LORD,--- the promised Messiah.--- Some further suppose, that *Eve* was the first Believer; and therefore they translate it thus, the *Seed* (not of THE, but) of THIS *Woman*: Which magnifies the Grace of God so much the more, that she, who was first in the Transgression, should be the first Partaker of Redemption.--- *Adam* believed also, and was saved:--- For unto *Adam* and his Wife did the LORD GOD make Coats of Skins, and clothed THEM; which was a remarkable Type of their being clothed with the Righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This

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This Promise was literally fulfilled in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ.--- *Satan* bruised his Heel, when he tempted him for Forty Days together in the Wilderness:--- He bruised his Heel, when he raised up strong Persecution against him during the Time of his publick Ministry:--- He in an especial Manner bruised his Heel, when our Lord complained that his Soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto Death, and he sweat great Drops of Blood falling upon the Ground, when praying in the Garden:--- He bruised his Heel, when he put it into the Heart of *Judas* to betray him:--- And he bruised him yet most of all, when his Emissaries nailed him to an accursed Tree, and our Lord cried out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*--- Yet, in all this, the blessed Jesus, the *Seed of the Woman*, bruised *Satan's* accursed Head:--- For, in that he was tempted, he was able to succour those that are tempted. By his Stripes we are healed. The Chastisement of our Peace was upon him. By dying, he destroyed him that had the Power of Death, that is, the Devil.--- He thereby spoiled Principalities and Powers, and made a Shew of them openly, triumphing over them upon the Cross.---

This Promise has been, is, and will be, fulfilled in the Elect of God considered collectively, as well before as after the Coming of our Lord in the Flesh:--- For they may be called the *Seed of the Woman*. Marvel not, that all that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer Persecution.--- In this Promise there is an eternal Enmity put between the *Seed of the Woman*, and the *Seed of the Serpent*; so that those that are born after the Flesh, cannot but persecute those that are born after

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after the Spirit.--- This Enmity shewed itself, soon after this Promise was revealed, in *Cain's* bruising the Heel of *Abel*: It continued in the Church through all Ages before Christ came in the Flesh, as the *History of the Bible*, and the 11th Chapter of the *Hebrews* plainly shew: --- It raged exceedingly after our Lord's Ascension; witness the *Acts of the Apostles*, and the *History of the primitive Christians*:--- It now rages, and will continue to rage, and shew itself, in a greater or less Degree, to the End of Time. But let not this dismay us; for, in all this, the *Seed of the Woman* is more than Conqueror, and bruises the Serpent's Head.---- Thus the *Israelites*, the more they were oppressed, the more they increased; --- Thus it was with the Apostles; --- Thus it was with their *immediate Followers*. So that *Tertullian* compares the Church in his Time to a mowed Field; the more frequently it is cut, the more it grows.--- The Blood of the Martyrs was always the Seed of the Church. And I have often sat down with Wonder and Delight, and admired how God has made the very Schemes which his Enemies contrived in order to hinder, the most effectual Means to propagate his Gospel. The Devil has had so little Success in Persecution, that if I did not know that he and his Children, according to this Verse, could not but persecute, I should think he would count it his Strength to sit still.--- What did he get by persecuting the Martyrs in *Queen Mary's* Time?--- Was not the Grace of God exceedingly glorified in their Support? --- What did he get by persecuting the good old Puritans? Did it not prove the Peopling of *New-England*? --- Or, to come nearer our own Times, What has he got

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got by putting us out of the Synagogues? Hath not the Word of God, since that, mightily prevailed? --- My dear Hearers, you must excuse me for enlarging on this Head; God fills my Soul generally, when I come to this Topick. I can say with *Luther*, "If it were not for Persecution, "I should not understand the Scripture." If Satan should be yet suffered to bruise my Heel further, and his Servants should thrust me into Prison, I doubt not but even that would only tend to the more *effectual bruising of his Head*.--- I remember a Saying of the then Lord Chancellor to the pious *Bradford*: "Thou hast done "more Hurt, said he, by thy Exhortations in "private in Prison, than thou didst in preaching "before thou wast put in," or Words to this Effect: The Promise of the Text is my daily Support; *I will put Enmity between thy Seed and her Seed; it shall bruise thy Head, and thou shalt bruise his Heel*.---

Further: This Promise is also fulfilled, not only in the Church in general, but in every individual Believer in particular.--- In every Believer there are two Seeds, the *Seed of the Woman*, and the *Seed of the Serpent*; --- The Flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh.--- It is with the Believer, when quickned with Grace in his Heart, as it was with *Rebekah* when she had conceived *Esau* and *Jacob* in her Womb; she felt a Struggling, and began to be uneasy; --- *If it be so*, says she, *why am I thus?* --- Thus Grace and Nature struggle (if I may so speak) in the Womb of a Believer's Heart: --- But, as it was there said, The Elder shall serve the Younger; so it is here,--- Grace in the End shall get

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the better of Nature,--- The Seed of the Woman shall bruise the Serpent's Head. Many of you perhaps, that have believed in Christ, may find some particular Corruption yet strong, so strong, that you are sometimes ready to cry out with *David, I shall fall one Day by the Hand of Saul.*--- But, fear not, the Promise in the Text insures the Perseverance and Victory of Believers over Sin, Satan, Death and Hell.--- What if indwelling Corruption does yet remain, and the Seed of the Serpent bruise your Heel, in vexing and disturbing your righteous Souls? Fear not, tho' faint, yet pursue;--- You shall yet bruise the Serpent's Head. Christ hath died for you; and yet a little while, and he will send Death to destroy the very Being of Sin in you.--- Which brings me

To shew the most extensive Manner in which the Promise of the Text shall be fulfilled, *viz.* at the final Judgment, when the Lord Jesus shall present the Elect to his Father without Spot or Wrinkle, or any such Thing, glorified both in Body and Soul.---

Then shall the Seed of the Woman give the last and fatal Blow, in bruising the Serpent's Head.--- Satan the Accuser of the Brethren, and all his accursed Seed, shall then be cast out, and never suffered to disturb the Seed of the Woman any more:--- Then shall the Righteous shine in the Kingdom of their Father, and sit with Christ on Thrones in Majesty on high.

Let us therefore not be weary of Well-doing; for we shall reap an eternal Harvest of Comfort, if we faint not.--- Dare, dare, my dear Brethren in Christ, to follow the Captain of your Salvation, who was made perfect thro' Sufferings.--- The Seed
of

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of the Woman shall bruise the Serpent's Head. --- Fear not Men. --- Be not too much cast down at the Deceitfulness of your Hearts. --- Fear not Devils; --- You shall get the Victory even over them. --- The Lord Jesus has engaged to make you more than Conquerors over all. --- Plead with your Saviour, plead. --- Plead the Promise in the Text. --- Wrestle, wrestle with God in Prayer. --- If it has been given you to believe, fear not if it should also be given you to suffer. Be not anywise terrified by your Adversaries; --- The King of the Church has them all in a Chain: --- Be kind to them, pray for them; but fear them not. The Lord will yet bring back his Ark, tho' at present driven into the Wilderness; and *Satan* like Lightning shall fall from Heaven.

Are there any Enemies of God here? The Promise of the Text encourages me to bid you Defiance: --- The *Seed of the Woman*, the ever-blessed *Jesus*, shall bruise the Serpent's Head. --- What signifies all your Malice? --- You are only raging Waves of the Sea, foaming out your own Shame. --- For you, without Repentance, is reserved the Blackness of Darkness for ever. --- The Lord Jesus sits in Heaven ruling over all, and causing all Things to work for his Childrens Good: --- He laughs you to scorn: --- He hath you in the utmost Derision, and therefore so will I. --- Who are you that persecute the Children of the ever-blessed God? --- Tho' a poor Stripling, the Lord Jesus, the *Seed of the Woman*, will enable me to bruise your Heads.

My Brethren in Christ, I think I do not speak thus in my own Strength, but in the Strength of my Redeemer. --- I know in whom I have belie-

ved; — I am perswaded he will keep that safe which I have committed unto him. — He is faithful who hath promised, *that the Seed of the Woman shall bruise the Serpent's Head.* — May we all experience a daily Completion of this Promise, both in the Church and in our Hearts, till we come to the Church of the First-born, the Spirits of just Men made perfect, in the Presence and actual Fruition of the great God our heavenly Father !

To whom, with the Son and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed all Honour, Power, Might, Majesty and Dominion, now and for evermore. Amen.



S E R M O N I I I .

Persecution every Christian's LOT.

2 TIMOTHY iii. 12.

Yea, and all that will live godly in CHRIST JESUS, shall suffer PERSECUTION.

WHEN our LORD JESUS was pleased to take upon him the Form of a Servant, and went about preaching the Kingdom of God, he took all Opportunities in publick, more especially in private, to caution his Disciples against seeking great Things for themselves ;

selves; and also to forewarn them of the many Distresses, Afflictions and Persecutions, which they must expect to endure and go through for his Name's Sake.—The great Apostle *Paul* therefore, the Author of this Epistle, in this, as in all other Things, following the Steps of his blessed Master, takes particular Care, among other Apostolical Admonitions, to warn young *Timothy* of the Difficulties he must expect to meet with in the Course of his Ministry:—*This know also*, says he, *ver. 1.* of this Chapter, *that in the last Days perilous Times shall come. For Men shall be Lovers of their own selves, Covetous, Proud, Blasphemers, disobedient to Parents, Unthankful, Unholy, without natural Affection, Truce-breakers, false Accusers, Incontinent, Fierce, Despisers of those that are Good, Traitors, Heady, High-minded, Lovers of Pleasure more than Lovers of God; having a Form of Godliness, but denying the Power thereof: From such turn away. For of this Sort are they which creep into Houses, and lead captive silly Women laden with Sins, led away with divers Lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the Knowledge of the Truth. Now, as JANNES and JAMBRES (two of the Egyptian Magicians) withstood MOSES (by working sham Miracles) so do they also resist the Truth; and, notwithstanding they keep up the Form of Religion, are Men of corrupt Minds, reprobate concerning the Faith.—But, in order to keep him from sinking under their Opposition, he tells him, that tho' God, for wise Ends, permitted these false Teachers, as he did the Magicians, to oppose for some Time, yet they should now proceed no further: For their Folly, says he, shall be made manifest unto all Men, as theirs (i. e. the*

MAGICIANS) also was, when they could not stand before MOSES because of the Boyl: For the Boyl was upon the *Magicians*, as well as upon all the *Egyptians*.—And then, to encourage TIMOTHY yet the more, he propounds to him his own Example;—*But thou hast fully known my Doctrine, Manner of Life, Purpose, Faith, Long-suffering, Charity, Patience, Persecutions, Afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what Persecutions I endured; but out of them all the LORD delivered me.*—And then, lest TIMOTHY might think that this was only the particular Case of PAUL, *Tea*, says he, in the Words of the Text, *and all that will live godly in CHRIST JESUS, shall suffer Persecution.*

The Words, without considering them as they stand in relation to the Context, contain a necessary and important Truth, *viz.* That *Persecution* is the common Lot of every godly Man.—This is a hard Saying, how few can bear it?—I trust God, in the following Discourse, will enable me to make it good, by shewing,

- I. What it is to *live godly in CHRIST JESUS.*
- II. The different Kinds of *Persecution* to which they, who *live godly*, are exposed.—
- III. Why it is, that *godly Men* must expect to *suffer Persecution.*

Lastly, We shall apply the Whole.

And, *first*, Let us consider what it is to *live godly in CHRIST JESUS.*—This supposes we are made the *Righteousness of God in CHRIST*, that we are *born again*, and are made one with CHRIST
by

by a *living Faith*, and a vital Union, even as *JESUS CHRIST* and the *FATHER* are *ONE*.—Unless we are thus converted and transformed by the *Renewing of our Minds*, we cannot properly be said to be *in CHRIST*, much less to *live godly* in him.—To be *in CHRIST* merely by Baptism, and an outward Profession, is not to be in *HIM* in the strict Sense of the Word: No; *They that are in CHRIST, are new Creatures; old Things are passed away, and all Things are become new* in their Hearts.—Their Life is hid with *CHRIST* in God;—Their Souls daily feed on the invisible Realities of another World.—To *live godly in CHRIST*, is to make the Divine Will, and not our own, the sole Principle of all our Thoughts, Words, and Actions; so that, *whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we do all to the Glory of God*.—Those who *live godly in CHRIST*, may not so much be said to *live*, as *CHRIST* to *live* in them:—He is their *ALPHA* and *OMEGA*, their First and Last, their Beginning and End.—They are led by his Spirit, as a Child is led by the Hand of its Father; and are willing to follow the Lamb whithersoever he leads them.—They hear, know, and obey his Voice.—Their Affections are set on Things above;—Their Hopes are full of Immortality;—Their Citizenship is in Heaven.—Being born again of God, they habitually live to, and daily walk with, God.—They are *pure in Heart*; and, in short, from a Principle of *FAITH in CHRIST*, holy in all Manner of Conversation and Godliness.

This is to *live godly in CHRIST JESUS*: And hence we may easily learn, why so few suffer *Persecution*? Because so few *live godly in CHRIST*

JESUS.---You may live *formally* in CHRIST, you may attend on outward Duties, you may live *morally* in CHRIST, *i. e.* you may do (as they term it) no one any Harm, and avoid *Persecution*: But *they that will live godly in CHRIST JESUS, must suffer Persecution.*

What is the Meaning of the Word PERSECUTION, and how many Kinds there are of it, I come now to consider.

The Word PERSECUTION is derived from a Greek Word signifying to *pursue*, and generally implies "pursuing a Person for the Sake of his Goodness, or God's Good-will to him." The first Kind of it is that of the *Heart*.---We have an early Example of this in that wicked One *Cain*, who, because the Lord had Respect to *Abel* and his Offering, and not to him and his Offering, was very wroth, his Countenance fell, and at length he cruelly slew his envied Brother.---Thus the *Pharisees* hated and persecuted our Lord long before they laid hold on him: And our Lord mentions being inwardly hated of Men, as one Kind of PERSECUTION his Disciples were to undergo.---This Heart-enmity (if I may so term it) is the Root of all other Kinds of PERSECUTION, and is, in some Degree or other, to be found in the Soul of every unregenerated Man; and Numbers are guilty of this Persecution, who never have it in their Power to persecute any other Way. Nay, Numbers would be carried out actually to put in Practice all other Degrees of Persecution, was not the Name of *Persecution* become odious amongst Mankind, and did they not hereby run the Hazard of losing their Reputation. Alas! how many at the great Day, whom we know not
now,

now, will be convicted and condemned, that all their Life long harboured a secret Evil-will against ZION!—They may now skreen it before Men; but God seeth the Enmity of their Hearts, and will judge them as *Persecutors* at the great and terrible *Day of Judgment*.

A second Degree of *Persecution* is that of the *Tongue*;—for out of the *Abundance of the Heart, the Mouth speaketh*.—Many, I suppose, think it no Harm to shoot out Arrows, even bitter Words, against the Disciples of the Lord:—They scatter their Firebrands, Arrows and Death, saying, *Are we not in Sport?*—But, however they may esteem it, in God's Account Evil-speaking is a high Degree of *Persecution*. Thus *Ismael's* mocking *Isaac* in the Old, is termed *persecuting* him in the New Testament.—*Blessed are ye*, says our Lord, *when Men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all Manner of Evil against you falsely for my Name's Sake*.—From whence we may gather, that *Reviling*, and speaking all Manner of Evil *falsely* for *CHRIST's* Sake, is a high Degree of *Persecution*.—For a good Name, says the Wise Man, *is better than precious Ointment*, and, to many, is dearer than *Life itself*.—'Tis a great Breach of the sixth Commandment, to slander any one; but to speak evil of and slander the Disciples of *CHRIST*, merely because they are his Disciples, must be highly provoking in the Sight of God; and such who are guilty of it (without Repentance) will find that *JESUS CHRIST* will call them to an Account, and punish them for all their ungodly and hard Speeches in a Lake of Fire and Brimstone:—This shall be their Portion to drink.

The third and last Kind of *Persecution* is that which

which expresses itself in *Actions*. — As when wicked Men separate the Children of God from their Company; *Blessed are ye*, says our Lord, *when they shall separate you from their Company*; — Or expose them to Church-censures; *They shall put you out of their Synagogues*; — Or in threatening and prohibiting them from making an open Profession of his Religion or Worship, or Ministers from preaching his Word, as the *High Priests* threatened the Apostles, and forbade them *any more to speak in the Name of JESUS*; And PAUL breathed out *Threatnings and Slaughters against the Disciples of the Lord*; — Or when they call them into Courts; *You shall be called before Governors*, says our Lord; — Or when they fine, imprison, or punish them, by Confiscation of Goods, cruel Scourging, and, lastly, Death itself.

It would be impossible to enumerate in what various Shapes *Persecution* has appeared. — 'Tis a many-headed Monster, insatiable as Hell, cruel as the Grave; and, what is worse, it generally appears under the Cloke of Religion. — But, cruel, insatiable, and horrid as it is, they that live *godly in CHRIST JESUS*, must expect to suffer and encounter with it in all its Forms.

This is what we are to make good under our next general Head.

And, *first*, this appears from the whole Tenor of our Lord's Doctrine. — We will begin with his Divine Sermon on the Mount. *Blessed*, says he, *are they which are persecuted for Righteousness Sake; for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven*. So that, if our Lord spoke Truth, we are not so blessed as to have an Interest in the Kingdom of Heaven, unless we are or have been persecuted for
Righteous-

Righteousness's Sake.---- Nay, our Lord (this remarkable) employs three Verses in this Beatitude, and only one in each of the others; not only to shew that it was a Thing which Men (as Men) are unwilling to believe, but also the necessary Consequence of it upon our being Christians.---

This is likewise evident from all those Passages, wherein our Lord informs us, that he came upon the Earth, not to send *Peace*, but a *Sword*; and that the *Father-in-law* should be against the *Mother-in-law*, and that a Man's *Foes* should be those of his *own Household*. Passages, which tho' confined by false Prophets to the first, I am persuaded will be verified by the Experience of all true Christians in this and every Age of the Church.---

It would be endless to recount all the Places, wherein our Lord forewarns his Disciples, that they should be called before Rulers, thrust out of Synagogues, nay, that the Time would come, wherein Men should think they did God Service to kill them.--- For this Reason he so frequently declared, that unless a Man *forsake all that he had, and even hated Life itself, he could not be his Disciple*: And therefore it is worthy our Observation, that in that remarkable Passage, wherein our Lord makes such an extensive Promise to those who *left all for him*, he cautiously inserts PERSECUTION. And Jesus answered and said, *Verily I say unto you, there is no Man that hath left House, or Brethren, or Sisters, or Father, or Mother, or Wife, or Children, or Lands for my Sake and the Gospel's, but he shall receive an Hundred-fold now in this Time, Houses and Brethren, and Sisters and Mothers, and Children and Lands, with Persecutions* (the Word is in the Plural Number, including all Kinds of Persecution

Persecution) and in the World to come eternal Life.-- He that hath *Ears to hear*, let him *hear* what CHRIST says in all these Passages, and then confess, that *all who will live godly in CHRIST JESUS, shall suffer PERSECUTION.*

As this is proved from our Lord's Doctrine, so it is no less evident from his Life. Follow him from the Manger to the Cross, and see whether any *Persecution* was like that which the Son of God, the Lord of Glory, underwent whilst here on Earth.--- How was he hated by wicked Men?--- How often would that Hatred have excited them to take hold of him, had it not been for Fear of the People?--- How was he reviled, counted and called a Blasphemer, a Wine-bibber, a Samaritan, nay, a Devil, and, in one Word, had all Manner of Evil spoken against him falsely?--- What Contradiction of Sinners did he endure against himself? How did Men separate from his Company, and were ashamed to walk with him openly? inasmuch that he once said to his own Disciples, *Will you also go away?*--- Again,--- How was he stoned, thrust out of the Synagogues, arraigned as a Deceiver of the People, a seditious and pestilent Fellow, an Enemy to *Cæsar*, and as such scourged, blindfolded, spit upon, and at length condemned and nailed to an accursed Tree?--- Thus was the Master persecuted,--- thus did the Lord suffer;--- and the Servant is not above his Master, nor the Disciple above his Lord:--- *If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you*, says the Blessed JESUS. And again, *Every Man that is perfect* (that is, a true Christian) *must be as his Master, i. e. suffer as he did.* For in all these Things our Lord has led us an Example, that we should

should follow his Steps : And therefore, God forbid that any, who would *live godly in CHRIST JESUS*, should henceforward expect to escape suffering *Persecution*.

But further : Not only our Lord's Example, but the Example of all the Saints that ever lived, evidently demonstrates the Truth of the Apostle's Assertion in the Text. How soon was *Abel* made a Martyr for his Religion ?--- How was *Isaac* mocked by the Son of the Bond-woman ?--- And what a large Catalogue of suffering Old-Testament Saints have we recorded in the 11th Chapter of the *Hebrews* ?--- Read the *Acts of the Apostles*, and see how the first Christians were threatened, stoned, imprisoned, scourged, and persecuted even unto Death.--- Examine Church-history in After-ages, and you will find the Murder of the Innocents by *Herod*, was but an Earnest of the innocent Blood which should be shed for the Name of *JESUS*.--- Examine the Experience of Saints now living on Earth ; and, if it were possible to consult the *Spirits of just Men made perfect*, I am persuaded each would concur with the Apostle in asserting, that *all who will live godly in CHRIST JESUS, shall suffer PERSECUTION*.

For how can it be otherwise in the very Nature of Things ?--- Ever since the Fall, there has been an irreconcilable Enmity put between the Seed of the Woman and the Seed of the Serpent. Wicked Men hate God, and therefore cannot but hate those who are like him : They hate to be reformed, and therefore must hate and persecute those, who, by a contrary Behaviour, testify of them, that their Deeds are evil.--- Besides, Pride of Heart leads Men to persecute the Servants of *Jesus Christ*.---

If they commend them, they are afraid of being asked, "Why do not you follow them?"—And therefore because they dare not imitate, tho' they may sometimes be even forced to approve their Way, yet Pride and Envy make them turn Persecutors.—Hence it is, that as it was formerly, so it is now, and so will it be to the End of Time;—*He that is born after the FLESH*, the natural Man, does and will persecute *him that is born after the SPIRIT*, the regenerate Man.—Because Christians are not of the World, but Christ hath chosen them out of the World, therefore the World will hate them.—If it be objected against this Doctrine, "That we now live in a Christian World, and therefore must not expect such Persecution as formerly;" I answer, "All are not Christians that are called so; and, till the Heart is changed, the Enmity against God (which is the Root of all Persecution) remains:" And consequently Christians, falsely so called, will persecute as well as others.—I observed therefore, in the Beginning of this Discourse, that *Paul* mentions those that had a Form of Religion, as Persons of whom *Timothy* had Need be chiefly aware:—For, as our Lord and his Apostles were mostly persecuted by their Countrymen the *Jews*, so we must expect the like Usage from the Formalists of our own Nation, the *Pharisees*, who seem to be religious.—For the most horrid and barbarous *Persecutions* have been carried on by those who have called themselves Christians; witness the Days of *Queen Mary*, and the Fines, Banishments and Imprisonments of the Children of God in the last Century, and the bitter, irreconcilable Hatred that appears

in

in Thousands who call themselves Christians, even in the present Days wherein we live.

Persons, who argue against Persecution now, are not sufficiently sensible of the bitter Enmity of the Heart of every unregenerate Man against God. For my own Part, I am so far from wondering that Christians are persecuted, that I wonder our Streets do not run with the Blood of the Saints:—Was Mens Power equal to their Wills, such a horrid Spectacle would soon appear.

Persecution is necessary in respect to the godly themselves.— If we have not all Manner of Evil spoken of us, how can we know whether we love Contempt, and seek only that Honour which cometh from above?— If we have not Persecutors, how can our passive Graces be kept in Exercise?— How can many Christian Precepts be put into Practice?— How can we love, pray for, and do Good to, those who despitefully use us?— How can we overcome Evil with Good?— In short, how can we know we love God better than Life itself?— *Paul* was sensible of all this, and therefore so positively and peremptorily asserts, that *all that will live godly in CHRIST JESUS, must suffer PERSECUTION.*

Not that I affirm, “All are persecuted in a like Degree.” No: This would be contrary both to Scripture and Experience. But tho’ all Christians are not really called to suffer every Kind of *Persecution*, yet all Christians are liable there-to: And notwithstanding some may live in more peaceful Times of the Church than others, yet all Christians, in all Ages, will find by their own Experience, that, whether they act in a private or publick Capacity, they must, in some Degree or other, suffer *Persecution.*

Here

Here then I would make a Pause, and, by way of Application, exhort all Persons first to stand a while and examine themselves.— For, by what has been said, you may gather one Mark, whereby you may judge whether you are Christians or not.— Were you ever persecuted for Righteousness Sake? If not, you never yet lived godly in Christ our Lord.— Whatever you may say to the contrary, the inspired Apostle, in the Words of the Text (the Truth of which, I think, I have sufficiently proved) positively asserts, that *all that will live godly in Him, must suffer Persecution*.— Not that all that are persecuted are real Christians;— for many sometimes suffer, and are persecuted, on other Accounts than for Righteousness Sake.— The great Question therefore is, “Whether you were ever persecuted for living *Godly*?”— You may boast (as perhaps you may think) of your great Prudence and Sagacity (and indeed these are excellent Things) and glory because you have not run such Lengths, and made yourselves so singular, and liable to such Contempt, as some others have.— But, alas! this is not a Mark of your being of a *Christian*, but of a *Laodicean* Spirit, neither hot nor cold, and fit only to be spewed out of the Mouth of God.— That which you call Prudence, is only Cowardice, dreadful Hypocrisy, Pride of Heart, which makes you dread Contempt, and afraid to give up your Reputation for God.— You are ashamed of Christ and his Gospel; and in all Probability, was he to appear a second Time upon Earth, in Words, as well as Works, you would deny him.— Awake therefore, all ye that live only formally in *Christ Jesus*, and no longer seek that Honour which cometh

cometh of Man.--- I do not desire you to court, but I intreat you to live godly, and fear not Contempt for the Sake of *Jesus Christ*.--- Beg of God to give you his Holy Spirit, that you may see through and discover the latent Hypocrisy of your Hearts, and no longer deceive your own Souls.---

Remember, you cannot reconcile two irreconcilable Differences, God and Mammon, the Friendship of this World with the Favour of God.---

Know you not who hath told you, that the *Friendship of this World is Enmity with God*? --- If

therefore you are in Friendship with the World, notwithstanding all your specious Pretences to Piety, you are at Enmity with God: --- You are only Heart-hypocrites; and, *What is the Hope of the Hypocrite, when God shall take away his Soul*? --- Let the Words of the Text sound an Alarm in your Ears,--- Oh let them sink deep in-

to your Hearts; *Yea, and all that will live godly in CHRIST JESUS, shall suffer PERSECUTION.*

Secondly, From the Words of the Text, I would take Occasion to speak to those, "who are about to lift themselves under the Banner of CHRIST'S Cross."--- What say you?--- Are you resolved to *live godly in CHRIST JESUS*, notwithstanding the Consequence will be, that you *must suffer PERSECUTION*?--- You are beginning to build; but have you taken our Lord's Advice, to sit down first and count the Cost?--- Have you well weighed with yourselves that weighty Declaration,--- *He that loveth Father or Mother more than me, is not worthy of me*; --- And again, *Unless a Man forsake all that he hath, he cannot be my Disciple*?--- Perhaps some of you have great Possessions; Will not you go away sorrowful, if *Christ*

should require you to sell all that you have? --- Others of you again may be Kinsmen, or some way related, or under Obligations, to the High Priests, or other great Personages, who may be persecuting the Church of *Christ*: --- What say you? Will you, with *Moses*, rather chuse to *suffer Affliction with the People of God, than enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season*? --- Perhaps you may say, "*My Friends will not oppose me.*" --- That is more than you know: --- In all Probability your chief Enemies will be those of your own Household. --- If therefore they should oppose you, are you willing naked to follow a naked *Christ*? and to wander about in Sheep-skins and Goats-skins, in Dens and Caves of the Earth, being afflicted, destitute, tormented, rather than not be *Christ's* Disciples? --- You are now all following with Zeal, as *Ruth* and *Orpah* did *Naomi*, and may weep under the Word; but are not your Tears Crocodile's Tears? And, when Difficulties come, will you not go back from following your Lord, as *Orpah* departed from following *Naomi*? --- Have you really the Root of Grace in your Hearts? or, are you only Stony-ground Hearers? --- You receive the Word with Joy; but, when *Persecution* arises because of the Word, will you not be immediately offended? --- Be not angry with me for putting these Questions to you. I am jealous over you, but it is with a godly Jealousy: For, alas! how many have put their Hands to the Plow, and afterwards have shamefully looked back? --- I only deal with you, as our Lord did with the Person that said, LORD, *I will follow thee whithersoever thou wilt.* --- *The Foxes have Holes, and the Birds of the Air have Nests,*

Nests, but the Son of Man, says he, hath not where to lay his Head.— What say you? Are you willing to endure Hardness, and thereby approve yourselves good Soldiers of *Jesus Christ*?— You now come on Foot out of the Towns and Villages to hear the Word, and receive me as a Messenger of God:— But will you not by and by cry out, *Away with him, away with him, it is not fit such a Fellow should live upon the Earth?*— Perhaps some of you, like *Hazael*, may say, *Are we Dogs, that we should do this?* But, alas! I have met with many unhappy Souls, who have drawn back into Perdition, and have afterwards accounted me their Enemy, for dealing faithfully with them; tho' once, if it were possible, they would have *plucked out their own Eyes, and have given them unto me.*— Sit down therefore, I beseech you, and seriously count the Cost, and ask yourselves again and again, whether you count *all Things but Dung and Dross*, and are willing to suffer the Loss of all Things, *so that you may win Christ, and be found in Him*: For you may assure yourselves, the Apostle hath not spoken in vain, — *All that will live godly in CHRIST JESUS, shall suffer PERSECUTION.*

Thirdly, The Text speaks to you that are patiently suffering for the Truth's Sake:— *Rejoice, and be exceeding glad;— Great shall be your Reward in Heaven.*— For to you it is given, not only to believe, but also to suffer, and perhaps remarkably too, for the Sake of *Jesus*! This is a Mark of your Discipleship, an Evidence that *you do live godly in CHRIST JESUS.*— Fear not, therefore, neither be dismayed. Oh be not weary and faint in your Minds!— *Jesus, your Lord, your*

Life, cometh, and *his Reward is with him.*--- Tho' all Men forsake you, yet will not he: No; The Spirit of *Christ* and of Glory shall rest upon you. In *Patience therefore possess your Souls.*--- Sanctify the *Lord God* in your Hearts. Be in nothing terrified by your Adversaries:--- On their Part *Christ* is evil spoken of; on your Part he is glorified.--- Be not ashamed of your Glory, since others can glory in their Shame.--- Think it not strange concerning the fiery Trial, wherewith you are or may be tried.--- The Devil rages, knowing that he hath but a short Time to reign. He or his Emissaries have no more Power than what is given them from above:--- God sets them their Bounds, which they cannot pass; and the very *Hairs of your Head are all numbred.*--- Fear not; no one shall set upon you to hurt you, without your heavenly Father's Knowledge.--- Do your earthly Friends and Parents forsake you? Are you cast out of the Synagogues? The Lord shall reveal himself to you, as to the Man that was born blind;--- *Jesus Christ* shall take you up.--- If they carry you to Prison, and load you with Chains, so that the Iron enter into your Souls, even there shall *Christ* send an Angel from Heaven to strengthen you, and enable you, with *Paul* and *Silas*, to sing Praises at *Midnight.*--- Are you threatned to be thrown into a Den of Lions, or cast into a burning fiery Furnace, because you will not bow down and worship the Beast?--- Fear not; the God, whom you serve, is able to deliver you:--- Or, if he should suffer the Flames to devour your Bodies, they should only serve, as so many fiery Chariots, to carry your Souls to God.--- Thus it was with the Martyrs of old, so that one, when he was burning, cried out,

"Come,

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"Come, you Papists, if you want a Miracle, here, behold one! This Bed of Flames is to me a Bed of Down."---Thus it was with almost all that suffered in former Times: For *Jesus*, notwithstanding he withdrew his own Divinity from himself, yet has always lifted up the Light of his Countenance upon the Souls of suffering Saints.---*Fear not therefore those that can kill the Body, and after that have no more that they can do; but fear him only, who is able to destroy both Body and Soul in Hell.* Dare, dare, to live godly in CHRIST JESUS, tho' you suffer all Manner of PERSECUTION.

But are there any true Ministers of *Jesus Christ* here?---You'll not be offended if I tell you, that the Words of the Text are, in an especial Manner, applicable to you.---*Paul* wrote them to *Timothy*; and we, of all Men, *that live godly in CHRIST JESUS*, must expect to suffer the severest Persecution.---*Satan* will endeavour to bruise our Heels, let who will escape:---And it has been the general Way of God's Providence, in Times of Persecution, to permit the Shepherds first to be smitten, before the Sheep are scattered.---Let us not therefore shew that we are only Hirelings, who care not for the Sheep; but, like the great Shepherd and Bishop of Souls, let us readily *lay down our Lives for the Sheep*.---Whilst others are boasting of their great Preferments, let us rather glory in our great Afflictions and Persecutions for the Sake of *Christ*.---*Paul* now rejoices that he suffered Afflictions and Persecutions at *Iconium* and *Lystra*:---Out of all the Lord delivered him;---Out of all the Lord will deliver us, and cause us hereafter to sit down

with him on Thrones, when he comes to judge the Twelve Tribes of *Israel*.

I could proceed ; but I am conscious, in this Part of my Discourse, I ought more particularly to speak to myself, knowing that *Satan* has desired to have me, that he may *sift me as Wheat*. I know I must (How can it be avoided?) *suffer great Things for Christ's Name's Sake*.---Without a Spirit of Prophecy, we may easily discern the Signs of the Times. *Persecution* is even at the Doors:---The Tabernacle of the Lord is already driven into the Wilderness:---The Ark of the Lord is fallen into the unhallowed Hands of uncircumcised *Philistines*. They have long since put us out of their Synagogues, and High Priests have been calling on Civil Magistrates to exert their Authority against the Disciples of the Lord.---Men in Power have been *breathing out Threatnings*:---We may easily guess what will follow, Imprisonment and Slaughter.---The Storm has been gathering some Time;---It must break shortly. Perhaps it may fall on me first.

Brethren therefore, whether in the Ministry or not, I beseech you, *pray for me*, that I may never suffer justly, as an Evil-doer, but only for Righteousness Sake.—Oh pray that I may not deny my Lord in anywise, but that I may joyfully follow him, both to Prison and to Death, if he is pleased to call me to seal his Truths with my Blood.---Be not ashamed of Christ, or of his Gospel, tho' I should become a Prisoner of the Lord.—Tho' I am bound, the Word of God will not be bound:--No; an open, an effectual Door is opened for preaching the everlasting Gospel, and Men or Devils shall never be able to prevail against it.—
Only

Only pray, that, whether it be in Life or Death, Christ may be glorified in me : — Then I shall rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.

And now, to whom shall I address myself next? — To those, “who persecute their Neighbours for living godly in CHRIST JESUS.”

But, what shall I say to you? Howl and weep for the Miseries that shall come upon you : — For a little while the Lord permits you to ride over the Heads of his People; but, by and by, Death will arrest you, Judgment will find you, and Jesus Christ shall put a Question to you, which will strike you dumb, “Why persecuted you ME? —

You may plead your Laws and your Canons, and pretend what you do is out of a Zeal for God; but God shall discover the cursed Hypocrisy and serpentine Enmity of your Hearts, and give you over to the Tormentors. — ’Tis well, if in this Life God does not set some Mark upon you. — He

pleaded the Cause of *Nabath*, when innocently condemned for blaspheming against God and the King; — And our Lord sent forth his Armies, and destroyed the City of those who killed the Prophets, and stoned them that were sent unto them. — If you have a-mind therefore to fill up the Measure of your Iniquities, go on, persecute and despise the Disciples of the Lord : — But know, that for all these Things, God shall bring you into Judgment. Nay, those you now persecute, shall be in part your Judges, and sit on the Right-hand of the Majesty on High, whilst you are dragged by infernal Spirits into a Lake that burneth with Fire and Brimstone, and the Smoke of your Torment shall be ascending up for ever and ever. —

Lay down therefore, ye Rebels, your Arms against

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the most High God, and no longer persecute those who *live godly in CHRIST JESUS*.—The Lord will plead, the Lord will avenge, their Cause. You may be permitted to bruise their Heels, yet in the End they shall bruise your accursed Heads. I speak not this, as tho' I were afraid of you ; for I know in whom I have believed : Only out of pure Love I warn you, and because I know not but Jesus Christ may make some of you Vessels of Mercy, and snatch you, even *you Persecutors*, as Fire-brands out of the Fire.—Jesus Christ came into the World to save Sinners, even Persecutors, the worst of Sinners : — His Righteousness is sufficient for them ; — his Spirit able to purify and change their Hearts.—He once converted *Saul* : — May the same God magnify his Power, in converting all those who are causing the *godly in Christ Jesus*, as much as in them lies, *to suffer Persecution* ! The Lord be with you all. *Amen.*

SER-

SERMON IV.

Abraham's offering up his Son Isaac.

GENESIS xxii. 12.

And he said, Lay not thine Hand upon the Lad, neither do thou any Thing unto him ; for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy Son, thine only Son from me.

THE great Apostle Paul, in one of his Epistles, informs us, that *whatsoever was written aforetime was written for our Learning, that we through Patience and Comfort of the Holy Scripture might have Hope.*—And as without Faith it is impossible to please God, or be accepted in Jesus, the Son of his Love ; we may be assured, that whatever Instances of a more than common Faith are recorded in the Book of God, they were more immediately designed by the Holy Spirit for the Learning and Imitation of us, upon whom the Ends of the World are come.—For this Reason, the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, in the 11th Chapter, mentions such a noble Catalogue of Old-testament Saints and Martyrs, *who subdued Kingdoms, wrought Righteousness, stopped the Mouths of Lions, &c. and are gone before us to inherit the Promises.* A sufficient Confutation,

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futation, I think, of their Error, who lightly esteem the Old-testament Saints, and would not have them mentioned to Christians, as Persons whose Faith and Patience we are called upon more immediately to follow.—If this was true, the Apostle would never have produced such a Cloud of Witnesses out of the Old Testament, to excite the Christians of the first, and consequently purest Age of the Church, to continue stedfast and unmoveable in the Profession of their Faith.—Amidst this Catalogue of Saints, methinks the Patriarch *Abraham* shines the brightest, and differs from the others, as one Star differeth from another Star in Glory; for he shone with such distinguished Lustre, that he was called the *Friend of God*, the *Father of the Faithful*; and those who believe on Christ, are said to be Sons and Daughters of, and to be blessed with, faithful *Abraham*.—Many Trials of his Faith did God send this great and good Man, after he had commanded him to get out from his Country, and from his Kindred, unto a Land which he should shew him;—But his last was the most severe of all, I mean, that of offering up his only Son.—This, by the Divine Assistance, I propose to make the Subject of your present Meditation, and, by way of Conclusion, to draw some practical Inferences from the Observations that God shall enable me to draw from this instructive Story.

The sacred Penman begins the Narrative thus; Ver. 1. "*And it came to pass, after these Things, God did tempt Abraham.*"—*After these Things*, that is, after he had underwent many severe Trials before, after he was old, full of Days, and might flatter himself perhaps that the Troubles and Toils of

of Life were now finished ; — *After these Things, God did tempt Abraham.* — Christians, you know not what Trials you may meet with before you die : — Notwithstanding you may have suffered, and been tried much already, yet, it may be, a greater Measure is still behind, which you are to fill up. — *Be not high-minded, but fear.* — Our last Trials, in all Probability, will be the greatest : — And we can never say our Warfare is accomplished, or our Trials finished, till we bow down our Heads, and give up the Ghost. — “ *And it came to pass, after these Things, that God did tempt Abraham.* ”

“ *God did tempt Abraham.* ” — But can the Scripture contradict itself? Does not the Apostle *James* tell us, *that God tempts no Man?* and God does tempt no Man to Evil, or on purpose to draw him into Sin ; for, when a Man is thus tempted, he is drawn away of his own Heart's Lust, and enticed. — But in another Sense God may be said to tempt, I mean, to *try his Servants* ; and in this Sense we are to understand that Passage of *Matthew*, where we are told, that *Jesus was led up by the Spirit (the good Spirit) into the Wilderness, to be tempted of the Devil.* — And our Lord, in that excellent Form of Prayer which he has been pleased to prescribe us, does not require us to pray that we may not absolutely be led into Temptation, but delivered from the Evil of it ; — Whereby we may plainly infer, that God sees it fit sometimes to lead us into Temptation, that is, to bring us into such Circumstances as will try our Faith and other Christian Graces. — In this Sense we are to understand the Expression before us ; — *God did tempt or try Abraham.*

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How God was pleased to reveal his Will at this Time to his faithful Servant, whether by the *Shechinah*, or *Divine Appearance*, or by a small still Voice, as he spoke to *Elijah*, or by a Whisper, like that of the Spirit to *Philip*, when he commanded him to go join himself to the *Eunuch's* Chariot, we are not told, nor is it material to enquire. 'Tis enough that we are informed, God said unto him *Abraham*, and that *Abraham* knew it was the Voice of God :— For *he said, Behold, here I am.*—Oh what a holy Familiarity (if I may so speak) is there between God, and those holy Souls that are united to him by Faith in Christ Jesus! God says, *Abraham*; and *Abraham* said (it should seem without the least Surprise) *Behold, here I am.*—Being reconciled to God by the Death and Obedience of Christ, which he rejoiced in, and saw by Faith afar off;— he did not, like guilty *Adam*, seek the *Trees of the Garden* to hide himself from, but takes Pleasure in conversing with God, and talketh with him, as a Man talketh with his Friend.—Oh that Christless Sinners knew what it is to have Fellowship with the Father and the Son! They would envy the Happiness of Saints, and count it all Joy to be termed *Enthusiasts* and Fools for Christ's Sake.

But what does God say to *Abraham*? Ver. 2.
 "Take now thy Son, thine only Son *Isaac*, whom
 "thou lovest, and get thee into the Land of *Moriah*,
 "and offer him there for a Burnt-offering
 "upon one of the Mountains which I shall tell
 "thee of."

Every Word deserves our particular Observation.—Whatever he was to do, he must do it *now*,
 im-

immediately, without conferring with Flesh and Blood.—But what must he do? *Take now thy Son.*—Had God said, *Take now a Firstling, or choicest Lamb or Beast of thy Flock, and offer it up for a Burnt-offering,* it would not have appeared so ghastly; but for God to say, *Take now thy Son, and offer him up for a Burnt-offering,* one would have imagined, was enough to stagger the strongest Faith.—But this is not all:—It must not only be a Son, but *thine only Son Isaac, whom thou lovest.*—If it must be a Son, and not a Beast, that must be offered, why will not *Ishmael* do, the Son of the Bond-woman? No, it must be his *only Son*, the Heir of all Things, his *Isaac*, by Interpretation *Laughter*, the Son of his old Age, in whom his Soul delighted, *whom thou lovest*; says God, in whose Life his own was wrapped up:—And this Son, this *only Son*, this *Isaac*, the *Son of his Love*, must be taken now, even now, without Delay, and be offered up by his own Father, for a Burnt-offering, upon one of the Mountains of the which God would tell him.

Well might the Apostle, speaking of this Man of God, say, that *against Hope he believed in Hope, and, being strong in Faith, gave Glory to God:—* For, had he not been blessed with Faith which Man never before had, he must have refused to comply with this severe Command.—For how many Arguments might Nature suggest, to prove that such a Command could never come from God, or to excuse himself from obeying it? “What! might the good Man have said, butcher my
“own Child! it is contrary to the very Law of
“Nature:—Much more to butcher my dear Son
“*Isaac*,—in whose Seed God himself has assured

“me

" me, that all the Families of the Earth shall be
 " blessed. — But supposing I could give up my
 " own Affections, and be willing to part with
 " him, tho' I love him so dearly, yet, if I mur-
 " der him, what will become of God's Promise? —
 " Besides, I am now like a City built upon a
 " Hill; — I shine as a *Light in the World*, in the
 " midst of a crooked and perverse Generation: —
 " How then shall I cause God's Name to be blas-
 " phemed, how shall I become a By-word among
 " the Heathen, if they hear that I have commit-
 " ted a Crime which they abhor! But, above all,
 " what will *Sarah* my Wife say? How can I
 " ever return to her again, after I have imbrued
 " my Hands in my dear Child's Blood? — Oh
 " that God would pardon me in this Thing, or
 " take my Life in the Place of my Son's!" Thus,
 I say, *Abraham* might have argued, and that too
 seemingly with great Reason, against complying
 with the Divine Command. But as before by
 Faith he considered not the Deadness of *Sarah's*
 Womb, when she was past Age, but believed on
 him, who said, "*Sarah* thy Wife shall bear thee
 " a Son indeed;" so now, being convinced that
 the same God spoke to and commanded him to
 offer up that Son, and knowing that God was
 able to raise him from the Dead, without Delay
 he obeys the heavenly Call.

Oh that Unbelievers would learn of faithful
Abraham, and believe whatever is revealed from
 God, tho' they cannot fully comprehend it! *Abra-*
ham knew God commanded him to offer up his
 his Son, and therefore believed, notwithstanding
 carnal Reasoning might suggest many Objections. —
 We have sufficient Testimony, that God has spoken

to us by his Son; Why should we not also believe, tho' many Things in the New Testament are above our Reason? For, where Reason ends, Faith begins.—And, however Infidels may stile themselves Reasoners, of all Men they are the most unreasonable:—For, is it not contrary to all Reason, to measure an infinite by a finite Understanding, or think to find out the Mysteries of Godliness to Perfection?

But to return to the Patriarch *Abraham*:—We observed before what plausible Objections he might have made;—But he answered not a single Word:—No, — without replying against his Maker, — we are told, *Ver. 3.* that “*Abraham rose up early in the Morning, and saddled his Ass, and took two of his young Men with him, and Isaac his Son, and clave the Wood for the Burnt-offering, and rose up and went unto the Place of which God had told him.*”

From this Verse we may gather, that God spoke to *Abraham* in a Dream, or Vision of the Night:—For it is said, he *rose up early*.—Perhaps it was near the fourth Watch of the Night, just before Break of Day, when God said, *Take now thy Son;*—And *Abraham* rises up early to do so;—As I doubt not but he used to rise early to offer up his Morning-sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving.—It is often remarked of People in the Old Testament, that they rose early in the Morning; and particularly of our Lord in the New, that he rose a great while before Day to pray.—The Morning befriends Devotion; and, if People cannot use so much Self-denial as to rise early to pray, I know not how they will be able to die at a Stake (if called to it) for Jesus Christ.

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The Humility as well as the Piety of the Patriarch is observable : — He saddled his own Ass (for great Men should be humble ;) and to shew his Sincerity, tho' he took two of his young Men with him, and *Isaac* his Son, yet he keeps his Design as a Secret from them all : — Nay, he does not so much as tell *Sarah* his Wife ; — For he knew not but she might be a Snare unto him in this Affair ; and, as *Rebekah* afterwards, on another Occasion, advised *Jacob* to flee, so she also might perswade *Isaac* to hide himself ; — Or the young Men, had they known of it, might have forced him away, as in After-ages the Soldiers rescued *Jonathan* out of the Hands of *Saul*. — But *Abraham* sought no such Evasion, and therefore like an *Israelite* indeed, in whom there was no Guile, he himself resolutely *clave the Wood for the Burnt-offering, rose up and went into the Place of which God had told him*. — In the second Verse God commanded him to offer up his Son upon one of the Mountains which he would tell him of. — He commanded him to offer his Son up, but would not then directly tell him the Place where ; — This was to keep him dependent and watching unto Prayer : — For there's nothing like being kept waiting upon God ; and, if we do, assuredly God will reveal himself unto us yet further in his own Time. — Let us practise what we know, follow Providence so far as we can see already ; and what we know not, what we see not as yet, let us only be found in the Way of Duty, and the Lord will reveal even that unto us. — *Abraham* here knew not directly where he was to offer up his Son ; — But he rises up and sets forward, and behold now God shews him : “ *And*
“ *be*

"*he went to the Place of which God had told him.*"--- Let us go and do likewise.

Ver. 4. "Then on the third Day Abraham lifted up his Eyes, and saw the Place afar off."

So that the Place, of which God had told him, was no less than three Days Journey distant from the Place where God first appeared to him, and commanded him to take his Son. Was not this to try his Faith, and to let him see that what he did was not merely from a sudden Pang of Devotion, but a Matter of Choice and Deliberation? But who can tell what the aged Patriarch felt during these three Days? Strong as he was in Faith, I am persuaded his Bowels often yearned over his dear Son *Isaac*.--- Methinks I see the good old Man walking with his dear Child in his Hand, and now and then looking upon him, loving him, and then turning aside to weep. And perhaps sometimes he stays a little behind to pour out his Heart before God, for he had no Mortal to tell his Case to.--- Then, methinks, I see him join his Son and Servants again, and talking to them of the Things pertaining to the Kingdom of God, as they walked by the Way.— At length, *on the third Day, he lifts up his Eyes, and saw the Place afar off.*— And, to shew that he was yet sincerely resolved to do whatsoever the Lord required of him, he even now will not discover his Design to his Servants, but said, *Ver. 5. to his young Men* (as we should say to our worldly Thoughts, when about to tread the Courts of the Lord's House) *Abide you here with the Asfs; and I and the Lad will go up yonder and worship, and come again to you.*— This was a sufficient Reason for their staying behind; and, it being their Master's Custom

to go frequently to Worship, they could have no Suspicion of what he was going about.--- And by *Abraham's* saying, that he and the Lad would come again, I am apt to think he believed God would raise him from the Dead, if so be he permitted him to offer his Child up for a Burnt-offering.--- However that be, he is yet resolved to obey God to the uttermost; and therefore,

Ver. 6. " Abraham took the Wood of the Burnt-offering, and laid it upon Isaac his Son; and he took the Fire in his Hand, and a Knife, and they went both of them together."—Little did *Isaac* think that he was to be offered upon that very Wood which he was carrying upon his Shoulders; and therefore, *Ver. 7. Isaac* innocently, and with a holy Freedom (for good Men should not keep their Children at too great a Distance) spake unto *Abraham* his Father, and said, *My Father; and he* (with equal Affection and holy Condescension) said, *Here am I, my Son.*—And to shew how careful *Abraham* had been (as all Christian Parents ought to be) to instruct his *Isaac* how to sacrifice to God, like a Youth trained up in the Way wherein he should go, *Isaac* said, *Behold the Fire and the Wood; but where is the Lamb for a Burnt-offering?*—How beautiful is early Piety! How amiable, to hear young People ask Questions about sacrificing to God in an acceptable Way! *Isaac* knew very well that a Lamb was wanting, and that a Lamb was necessary for a proper Sacrifice:—*" Behold the Fire and the Wood; but where is the Lamb for a Burnt-offering?"*—Young Men and Maidens, learn of him.

Hitherto it is plain *Isaac* knew nothing of his Father's Design:—But I believe, by what his Father

ther

ther said in Answer to his Question, that now was the Time *Abraham* revealed it unto him.

Ver. 8. "And Abraham said, My Son, God will provide himself a Lamb for a Burnt-offering."—Some think, *Abraham* by Faith saw the Lord Jesus afar off, and here spake prophetically of that Lamb of God already slain in Decree, and hereafter to be actually offered up for Sinners.—This was a Lamb of God's providing himself indeed (we dared not have thought of it) to satisfy his own Justice, and to render him just in justifying the Ungodly.—What is all our Fire and Wood, the best Preparation and Performances we can make or present, unless God had provided himself this Lamb for a Burnt-offering?—He could not away with them.—The Words will well bear this Interpretation. But, whatever *Abraham* might intend, I cannot but think he here made an Application, and acquainted his Son of God's dealing with his Soul; and at length, with Tears in his Eyes, and the utmost Affection in his Heart, cried out, *Thou art to be the Lamb, my Son*;—God has commanded me to provide thee for a Burnt-offering, and to offer thee upon the Mountain which we are now ascending.—And, as it appears from a subsequent Verse, *Isaac*, convinced that it was the Divine Will, made no Resistance at all:—For it is said, *They went both of them together*; and again, *Ver. 9.* when we are told, that *Abraham* bound *Isaac*, we do not hear of his complaining, or endeavouring to escape, which he might have done, being (as some think) near thirty Years of Age, and, 'tis plain, capable of carrying Wood enough for a Burnt-offering.—But he was Partaker of the like precious Faith with his aged Father, and therefore

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is as willing to be offered, as *Abraham* is to offer him : And so they went both of them together.

Ver. 9. At length they came to the Place of which God had told *Abraham*.----- " He built an Altar there, and laid the Wood in Order, and bound *Isaac* his Son, and laid him on the Altar upon the Wood."

And here let us pause a while, and by Faith take a View of the Place where the Father has laid him.---I doubt not but the blessed Angels hovered round the Altar, and sang, *Glory be to God in the Highest*, for giving such Faith to Man.—Come all ye tender-hearted Parents, who know what it is to look over a dying Child :—Fancy that you saw the Altar here erected before you, and the Wood laid in Order, and the belov'd *Isaac* bound upon it :—Fancy that you saw the aged Parent standing by weeping.—(For, why may we not suppose that *Abraham* wept, since Jesus himself wept at the Grave of *Lazarus* ?)—Oh what pious, endearing Expressions passed now alternately between the Father and the Son !—*Josephus* has a pathetick Speech made by each, whether genuine I know not :--- But methinks I see the Tears trickle down the Patriarch *Abraham's* Cheeks ; and, out of the Abundance of the Heart, he cries, Adieu, Adieu, my Son ;—The Lord gave thee to me, and the Lord calls thee away ;—Blessed be the Name of the Lord :—Adieu, my *Isaac*, my only Son, whom I love as my own Soul ; Adieu, Adieu. Methinks I see *Isaac* at the same Time meekly resigning himself into his heavenly Father's Hands, and praying to the most High to strengthen his earthly Parent to strike the Stroke.—But why do I attempt to describe what either Son

or Father felt? It is impossible:— We may indeed form some faint Idea of, but shall never fully comprehend it, till we come and sit down with them in the Kingdom of Heaven, and hear them tell the pleasing Story over again.— Hasten, O Lord, that blessed Time! — O let thy Kingdom come!

And now, *Ver. 10.* the fatal Blow is going to be given. “ *And Abraham stretched forth his Hand, and took the Knife to slay his Son.* ”— But do you not think he intended to turn away his Head, when he gave the Blow? Nay, why may we not suppose he sometimes drew his Hand in after it was stretched out, willing to take another last Farewel of his beloved *Isaac*, and desirous to defer it a little, tho’ resolved at last to strike home?— Be that as it will,— his Arm is now stretched out, the Knife is in his Hand, and he is about to put it to his dear Son’s Throat.

But sing, O Heavens! and rejoice, O Earth! Man’s Extremity is God’s Opportunity:— For behold, just as the Knife, in all Probability, was near his Throat, *Ver. 11.* “ *The Angel of the Lord,* ” (or rather the *Lord of Angels*, Jesus Christ, the “ Angel of the everlasting Covenant) *called unto him*, probably in a very audible Manner, *from Heaven* (his Dwelling-place) *and said, Abraham, Abraham.* — (The Word is doubled, to engage his Attention; and perhaps the Suddenness of the Call made him draw back his Hand, just as he was going to strike his Son.) *And Abraham said, Here am I.*—

And he said (Ver. 12.) Lay not thine Hand upon the Lad, neither do thou any Thing unto him:— For now know I that thou fearest God,

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seeing thou hast not withheld thy Son, thine only Son from me.

Here then it was that *Abraham* received his Son *Isaac* from the Dead in a Figure.—He was in effect offered upon the Altar, and God looked upon him as offered and given unto him.—Now it was that *Abraham's* Faith, being tried, was found more precious than Gold purified seven Times in the Fire.—Now as a Reward of Grace, tho' not of Debt, for this signal Act of Obedience, by an Oath, God confirms the Promise he made to him long before, *that in his Seed all the Nations of the Earth should be blessed*, Ver. 17, 18.

Oh with what Comfort may we suppose the good old Man and his Son went down from the Mount, and returned unto the young Men! Ver. 19. With what Joy may we imagine he went home, and related all that had passed to *Sarah*!—And above all, with what Triumph is he exulting now in the Paradise of God, and adoring rich, free, distinguishing, electing, everlasting Love, which alone made him to differ from the rest of Mankind, and rendred him worthy of that Title which he will have given him so long as the Sun and the Moon endure,—“*The Father of the Faithful!*”

But let us now draw our Eyes from the Creature, and do what *Abraham*, if he was present, would direct to;—I mean, fix them on the Creator, God *blessed for evermore*.

I see your Hearts affected, I see your Eyes weep.—(And indeed, who can refrain weeping at the Relation of such a Story?)—But, behold, I shew you a Mystery, hid under the Sacrifice of *Abraham's* only Son, which, unless your Hearts are hardned, must cause you to weep Tears of Love,

Love, and that plentifully too.—I would willingly hope you even prevent me here, and are ready to say, “It is the Love of God, in giving Jesus Christ to die for our Sins.—Yes; that is it.”—And yet perhaps you find your Hearts, at the mentioning of this, not so much affected.—Let this convince you, that we are all fallen Creatures, and that we do not love God or Christ as we ought to do : — For, if you admire *Abraham* offering up his *Isaac*, how much more ought you to extol, magnify and adore the Love of God, who so loved the World, as to give his only begotten Son Christ Jesus our Lord, *that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting Life?* — May we not well cry out, Now know we, O Lord, that thou hast loved us, since thou hast not withheld thy Son, thine only Son from us ? — *Abraham* was God’s Creature (and God was *Abraham*’s Friend) and therefore under the highest Obligation to surrender up his *Isaac*. But Oh stupendious Love ! whilst we were his Enemies, God sent forth his Son made of a Woman, made under the Law, that he might become a Curse for us. — Oh the Freeness, as well as the Infiniteness, of the Love of God our Father ! — ’Tis unsearchable : — I am lost in contemplating it ; — It is past finding out.—Think, O Believers, think of the Love of God, in giving Jesus Christ to be a Propitiation for our Sins.—And when you hear how *Abraham* built an Altar, and laid the Wood in Order, and bound *Isaac* his Son, and laid him upon the Altar upon the Wood ; — Think how your heavenly Father bound Jesus Christ his only Son, and offered him upon the Altar of his Justice, and laid upon him the Iniquities

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quities of us all.—When you read of *Abraham's* stretching forth his Hand to slay his Son,---Think, O think, how God actually suffered his Son to be slain, that we might live for evermore. --- Do you read of *Isaac* carrying the Wood upon his Shoulders, upon which he was to be offered? Let this lead you to Mount *Calvary* (this very Mount of *Moriah* where *Isaac* was offered, as some think) and take a View of the Antitype Jesus Christ, that Son of God's Love, bearing and ready to sink under the Weight of that Cross, on which he was to hang for us.---Do you admire *Isaac* so freely consenting to die, tho' a Creature, and therefore obliged to go when God called? --- Oh do not forget to admire infinitely more the dear Lord Jesus, that promised Seed, who willingly said, *Lo, I come* (tho' under no Obligation so to do) *to do thy Will*, to obey and die for Men, *O God!* --- Did you weep just now, when I bid you fancy you saw the Altar, and the Wood laid in Order, and *Isaac* laid bound on the Altar? --- Look up by Faith, behold the blessed Jesus, our all-glorious *Emmanuel*, not bound, but nailed on an accursed Tree: --- See how he hangs crowned with Thorns, and had in Derision of all that are round about him: --- See how the Thorns pierce him, and how the Blood in Purple Streams trickle down his sacred Temples! --- Hark how the God of Nature groans! --- See how he bows his Head, and at length gives up the Ghost! --- *Isaac* is saved, but Jesus, the God of *Isaac*, dies: --- A Ram is offered up in *Isaac's* Room, but Jesus has no Substitute; --- Jesus must bleed, Jesus must die; God the Father provided this Lamb for himself from all Eternity. He must be offered in Time, or
Man

Man must be damned for evermore. --- And now, where are your Tears? Shall I say, Refrain your Voice from weeping? No; rather let me exhort you to look to him whom you have pierced, and mourn, as a Woman mourneth for her First-born: For we have been the Betrayers, we have been the Murderers of this Lord of Glory; — And shall we not bewail those Sins, which brought the blessed Jesus to the accursed Tree? — Having so much done, so much suffered for us, so much forgiven, shall we not love much? Oh! let us love him with all our Hearts, and Minds, and Strength, and glorify him in our Souls and Bodies, for they are his. — Which leads me to a second Inference I shall draw from the foregoing Discourse.

From hence we may learn the Nature of a true, justifying Faith. — Whoever understands and preaches the Truth, as it is in Jesus, must acknowledge, that Salvation is God's free Gift, and that we are saved, not by any or all the Works of Righteousness which we have done or can do: — No; we can neither wholly or in part justify ourselves in the Sight of God. — The Lord Jesus Christ is our Righteousness; and, if we are accepted with God, it must be only in and through the personal Righteousness, the active and passive Obedience, of Jesus Christ his beloved Son. — This Righteousness must be imputed or counted over to us, and applied by Faith to our Hearts, or else we can in no wise be justified in God's Sight: — And that very Moment a Sinner is enabled to lay hold on Christ's Righteousness by Faith, he is freely justified from all his Sins, and shall never enter into Condemnation, notwithstanding he was a Fire-brand of Hell before. Thus it was that *Abra-*

ham

ham was justified before he did any good Work : He was enabled to believe on the Lord Christ ; — It was accounted to him for Righteousness, that is, Christ's Righteousness was made over to him, and so accounted his. — This, this is Gospel ; this is the only Way of finding Acceptance with God : — Good Works have nothing to do with our Justification in his Sight. — We are justified by Faith alone, as saith the Article of our Church ; — Agreeable to which the Apostle *Paul* says, *By Grace ye are saved, through Faith ; and that not of yourselves ; it is the Gift of God.* — Notwithstanding good Works have their proper Place : They justify our Faith, tho' not our Persons ; — They follow it, and evidence our Justification in the Sight of Men. — Hence it is that the Apostle *James* asks, Was not *Abraham* justified by Works ? (alluding no doubt to the Story on which we have been discoursing) that is, Did he not prove he was in a justified State, because his Faith was productive of good Works ? — This declarative Justification in the Sight of Men, is what is directly to be understood in the Words of the Text ; — *Now know I, says God, that thou fearest me, since thou hast not withheld thy Son, thine only Son from me.* — Not but that God knew it before ; but this is spoken in Condescension to our weak Capacities, and plainly shews, that his offering up his Son was accepted with God, as an Evidence of the Sincerity of his Faith, and for this was left on Record to future Ages. — Hence then you may learn, whether you are blessed with, and are Sons and Daughters of, faithful *Abraham*. — You say you believe ; you talk of free Grace and free Justification : — You do well ; — The Devils also believe and tremble.

tremble.—But has your Faith, which you pretend to, influenced your Hearts, renewed your Souls, and, like *Abraham's*, worked by Love? Are your Affections, like his, set on Things above? Are you heavenly-minded, and, like him, confess yourselves Strangers and Pilgrims on the Earth? In short, has your Faith enabled you to overcome the World, and strengthened you to give up your *Isaacs*, your Laughter, your most beloved Lusts, Friends, Pleasures and Profits for God? — If so, take the Comfort of it; for justly may you say, “We know assuredly, that we do fear and love God, or rather are loved of him.”—But if you are only talking Consenters, and have only a Faith of the Head, and never felt the Power of it in your Hearts, however you may bolster yourselves up, and say, “We have *Abraham* for our Father, or “Christ is our Saviour;” unless you get a Faith of the Heart, a Faith working by Love, you shall never sit with *Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, or Jesus Christ*, in the Kingdom of Heaven.

But I must draw one more Inference, and with that I shall conclude.

Learn, O Saints! from what has been said, to sit loose to all your worldly Comforts; and stand ready prepared to part with every Thing, when God shall require it at your Hand.—Some of you perhaps may have Friends, which are to you as your own Souls; and others may have Children, in whose Lives your own Lives are bound up:—All I believe have their *Isaacs*, their particular Delights of some Kind or other.—Labour, for Christ's Sake, labour, ye Sons and Daughters of *Abraham*, to resign them daily in Affection to God, that, when he shall require you really to sacrifice

crifice them, you may not confer with Flesh and Blood, no more than the blessed Patriarch now before us. — And as for you that have been in any Measure tried like unto him, let his Example encourage and comfort you. — Remember *Abraham* your Father was tried so before you: — Think, Oh think of the Happiness he now enjoys, and how he is incessantly thanking God for tempting and trying him when here below. — Look up often by the Eye of Faith, and see him sitting with his dearly beloved *Isaac* in the World of Spirits. — Remember it will be but a little while, and you shall sit with them also, and tell one another what God has done for your Souls. — There I hope to sit with you, and hear this Story of his offering up his Son from his own Mouth, and to praise the Lamb that sitteth upon the Throne, for what he hath done for all our Souls, for ever and ever.

S E R M O N V.

Saul's Conversion.

ACTS ix. 22.

But SAUL increased the more in Strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ.

IT is an undoubted Truth, however it may seem a Paradox to natural Men, that "*Who-
soever will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall
suffer*"

“*suffer Persecution.*”—And therefore 'tis very remarkable, that our blessed Lord, in his glorious Sermon on the Mount, after he had been pronouncing those blessed, who were poor in Spirit, meek, pure in Heart, and such like, immediately adds (and spends no less than three Verses in this Beatitude) *Blessed are they which are persecuted for Righteousness Sake.*—For no one ever was, or ever will be endowed with the forementioned Graces in any Degree, but he will at the same Time be persecuted for it in a like Measure.—There is an irreconcilable Enmity between the Seed of the Woman, and the Seed of the Serpent. — And if we are not of the World, but shew by our Fruits that we are in the Number of those which Jesus Christ has chosen out of the World, for that very Reason the World will hate us.—As this is true of every particular Christian, so it is true of every Christian Church in general.—For some Years past we have heard but little of a publick Persecution: Why? Because little of the Power of Godliness has prevailed amongst all Denominations whatsoever:—The strong Man armed has had full Possession of most Professors Hearts, and therefore he has let them rest in a false Peace. — But we may assure ourselves, when Jesus Christ begins to gather in his Elect in any remarkable Manner, and opens an effectual Door for preaching the everlasting Gospel, Persecution will flame out, and *Satan* and his *Emissaries* will do their utmost (tho' all in vain) to stop the Work of God.—Thus it was in the first Ages, thus it is in our Days, and thus it will be, till Time shall be no more.

Christians, and Christian Churches must then expect Enemies.—Our chief Concern should be, to

to learn how to behave towards them in a Christian Manner: — For, unless we take good heed to ourselves, we shall embitter our Spirits, and act unbecoming the Followers of that Lord, *who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, threatened not; and, as a Lamb before his Shearers is dumb, so opened he not his Mouth.* —

But what Motive shall we make use of to bring ourselves to this blessed Lamb-like Temper? Next to the immediate Operation of the Holy Spirit upon our Hearts, I know of no Consideration more conducive to teach us Long-suffering towards our most bitter Persecutors, than this, *viz.* “That, for all as we know to the contrary, some of those very Persons, who are now persecuting, may be chosen from all Eternity by God, and hereafter called in Time, to edify and build up the Church of Christ.”

The Persecutor *Saul* mentioned in the Words of the Text (and whose Conversion, God willing, I propose to treat on in the following Discourse) is a noble Instance of this Kind.

I say, a Persecutor, and that a bloody one: — For see how he is introduced in the first Verse of this Chapter; — *And Saul yet breathing out Threatnings and Slaughters against the Disciples of our Lord, went unto the High Priest, (Ver. 2.) and desired of him Letters to Damascus to the Synagogues, that if he found any of THIS WAY, whether they were Men or Women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.*

And Saul yet breathing out. — This implies that he had been a Persecutor before. — To prove that, we need only look back to the 7th Chapter, where we shall find him so very remarkably active at
Stephen's

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Stephen's Death, that the Witnesses laid down their Clothes at a young Man's Feet, whose Name was Saul.--- He seems, tho' young, to be in some Authority. Perhaps, for his Zeal against the Christians, he was preferred in the Church, and was allowed to sit in the great Council or *Sanhedrim*:--- For we are told, *Chap. viii. Ver. 1. That Saul was consenting unto his Death*; and again, at *Ver. 3.* he is brought in as excelling all in his Opposition; for thus speaks the Evangelist,--- *As for Saul, he made Havock of the Church, entring into every House, and haling Men and Women, committed them to Prison.*--- One would have imagined, that this should have satisfied, at least abated the Fury of, this young Zealot.--- No: Being exceedingly mad against them, as he himself informs *Agrippa*, and having made Havock of all in *Jerusalem*, he now is resolved to persecute the Disciples of the Lord, even to strange Cities; --- And therefore yet breathing out Threatnings.--- *Breathing out.*--- The Words are very *emphatical*, and expressive of his bitter Enmity.--- It was as natural to him now to *threaten* the Christians, as it was for him to *breathe*:--- He could scarce speak, but it was some Threatnings against them.--- Nay, he not only breathed out Threatnings, but Slaughters also (for those who threaten, would also slaughter, if it were in their Power:) And against whom does he breathe out these Threatnings? Against the Disciples of the Lord.--- Insatiable therefore as Hell, finding he could not confute or stop the Christians by Force of Argument, he is resolved to do it by Force of Arms; and therefore went to the High Priest (for there never was a Persecution yet, without a High Priest at the Head of it)

and

and desired of him Letters, issued out of his Spiritual Court, to the Synagogues or Ecclesiastical Courts at *Damascus*, giving him Authority, *that if he found any of THIS WAY, whether they were Men or Women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem*; I suppose, to be arraigned and condemned in the High Priest's Court there. Observe how he speaks of the Christians.--- *Luke*, who wrote the *Acts*, calls them *Disciples of the LORD*, and *Saul* stiles them *Men and Women of THIS WAY*.--- I doubt not but he represented them as a Company of *upstart Enthusiasts*, that had lately gotten into a new METHOD or Way of Living;--- that would not be content with the Temple-service, but they must be *righteous over much*, and have their private Meetings or Conventicles, and break Bread, as they called it, from House to House, to the great Disturbance of the Established Clergy, and to the utter Subversion of all Order and Decency.--- I don't hear that the High Priest makes any Objection:--- No, he was as willing to grant Letters, as *Saul* was to ask them; and wonderfully pleased within himself, to find he had such an active Zealot to employ against the Christians.

Well then, a judicial Process is immediately issued out, with the High Priest's Seal affixed to it.--- And now methinks I see the young Persecutor finely equipped, and pleasing himself with Thoughts, how triumphantly he should ride back with the *Men and Women of THIS WAY*, dragging after him to *Jerusalem*.

What a Condition may we imagine the poor Disciples at *Damascus* were in at this Time!---

No

No doubt they had heard of *Saul's* imprisoning and making Havock of the Saints at *Jerusalem*, and we may well suppose were apprised of his Design against them.—I am perswaded this was a growing, because a trying, Time with these dear People.— Oh how did they wrestle with God in Prayer, beseeching him either to deliver them from, or give them Grace sufficient to enable them to bear up under, the Fury of their Persecutors? The High Priest no doubt, with the rest of his Reverend Brethren, flattered themselves, that they should now put an effectual Stop to this growing Herefy, and waited with Impatience for *Saul's* Return.

But “ *He that sitteth in Heaven laughs them to scorn, the Lord has them in Derision.*” And therefore, *Ver. 3.* As SAUL journeyed, and came even near unto Damascus, perhaps to the very Gates, (our Lord permitting this, to try the Faith of his Disciples; and more conspicuously to baffle the Designs of his Enemies) suddenly (at Mid-day, as he acquaints *Agrippa*) there shined round about him a Light from Heaven,---- a Light brighter than the Sun; ---- And he fell to the Earth (and why not into Hell?) and heard a Voice saying unto him, SAUL, SAUL, why persecutest thou ME? The Word is doubled, *Saul, Saul*: Like that of our Lord to *Martha*; *Martha, Martha*; or the Prophet, *O Earth, Earth, Earth!* Perhaps these Words came like Thunder to his Soul.---- That they were spoken audibly, we are assured from *Ver. 7.* His Companions heard the Voice.---- Our Lord now arrests the persecuting Zealot, calls him by Name, *Saul, Saul*, (for the Word never does us good, till we find it spoken to us in particular)---
H Why

Why persecutest thou ME? Put the Emphasis upon the Word *Why*, what Evil have I done? Put it upon the Word *persecutest*, why persecutest? I suppose *Saul* thought he was not persecuting; no, he was only putting the *Laws of the Ecclesiastical Court into Execution*. But Jesus, whose Eyes are as a Flame of Fire, saw through the Hypocrisy of his Heart, that, notwithstanding his specious Pretences, all this proceeded from a persecuting Spirit, and secret Enmity of Heart against God; and therefore says, *Why persecutest thou ME?* Put the Emphasis upon the Word *ME*, *Why persecutest thou ME?* Alas! *Saul* was not persecuting *Christ*, was he? He was only taking Care to prevent *Innovations* in the Church, and bringing a Company of *Enthusiasts* to Justice, who otherwise would overturn the established Constitution.—— But Jesus says, *Why persecutest thou ME?* For what is done to *Christ's Disciples*, he takes it as done to himself, whether it be Good, or whether it be Evil.—— He that touches *Christ's Disciples*, touches the Apple of his Eye; --- And they that persecute the Followers of our Lord, would persecute our Lord himself, was he again to come and tabernacle amongst us.

I do not find that *Saul* gives any Reason why he did persecute. No, he was struck dumb; — As every Persecutor will be, when Jesus Christ puts this same Question to them at the terrible Day of Judgment. But being pricked at the Heart, no doubt with a Sense not only of this, but all his other Offences against the great God, he said, *Ver. 5. Who art thou, Lord?* See how soon God can change the Heart and Voice of his most bitter Enemies.—— Not many Days ago, *Saul* was not only blas-

blaspheming Christ himself, but, as much as in him lay, compelling others to blaspheme also :— But now he, who before was an Impostor, is now called *Lord* ;— *Who art thou, Lord ?*— This admirably points out the Way how God's Spirit works upon the Heart :— It first powerfully convinces of Sin, and of our damnable State ; and then puts us upon enquiring after Jesus Christ.— *Saul* being struck to the Ground, or rather pricked to the Heart, cries out after Jesus,— *Who art thou, Lord ?* As many of you that were never so far made sensible of your damnable State, as to be made feelingly to seek after Jesus Christ, were never yet truly convicted by, much less converted to, God. May the Lord, who struck *Saul*, effectually now strike all my Christless Hearers, and set them upon enquiring after Jesus as their ALL in ALL !— *Saul* said, *Who art thou, Lord ?* And the Lord said, *I am Jesus whom thou persecutest*.— Never did any one enquire truly after Jesus Christ, but Christ made a saving Discovery of himself to his Soul.— It should seem our Lord appeared to him in Person ; for *Ananias* afterwards says, *The Lord who appeared to thee in the Way which thou camest* ; or that may only imply Christ's meeting him in the Way.— It is not much Matter :— It is plain Christ here speaks to him, and says, *I am Jesus whom thou persecutest*.— It is remarkable, how our Lord takes to himself the Name of *Jesus* ;— For it is a Name in which he delights :— *I am Jesus a Saviour of my People*, both from the Guilt and Power of their Sins ;— But a *Jesus whom thou persecutest*.— This seems to be spoken to convince *Saul* more and more of his Sin ; and I doubt not but every Word was sharper than a two-edged Sword, and

came like so many Daggers to his Heart.— Oh how did these Words affect him ! a *Jesus!* a *Saviour!* and yet I am persecuting him !— This strikes him with Horror.— But then the Word *Jesus*, tho' he was a Persecutor, might give him some Hope.— However, our dear Lord, to convince *Saul* that he was to be saved by Grace, and that he was not afraid of his Power and Enmity, tells him,— “ *It is hard for thee to kick against the Pricks.* ”— As much as to say, Tho' he was persecuting, yet he could not overthrow the Church of Christ :— For he would sit as King upon his holy Hill of Zion ;— The Malice of Men or Devils should never be able to prevail against him.

And he, Ver. 6. trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Those, who think *Saul* had before a Discovery of *Jesus* made to his Heart, think that this Question is the Result of his Faith, and that he now desires to know what he shall do out of Gratitude for what the Lord had done for his Soul.— In this Sense it may be understood :— * And I have made use of it as an Instance to prove, that Faith will work by Love.— But perhaps it may be more agreeable to the Context, if we suppose, that *Saul* had only some distant Discovery of Christ made to him, and not a full Assurance of Faith :— For we are told, *he trembling and astonished*, trembling at the Thoughts of his persecuting a *Jesus*, and astonished at his own Vileness, and the infinite Condescension of this *Jesus*, cries out, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*— For Persons under Soul-trouble, and sore Conviction, would be glad to do any Thing, or comply on any Terms, to get Peace with

* See my Sermon on, *What think ye of Christ?*

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with God.--- "*Arise, says our Lord, and go into the City, and it shall be told thee what thou shalt do.*"

And here then will we leave *Saul* a while, and see what is become of his Companions.----- But

what shall we say? God is a Sovereign Agent;---

His sacred Spirit bloweth when and where it listeth;

He will have Mercy on whom he will have Mercy.

Saul is taken, but, as far as we know to the contrary, his Fellow-travellers are left to perish in

their Sins:--- For we are told, *Ver. 7. That the*

Men which journeyed with him stood indeed speech-

less, and hearing a confused Voice;--- I say a *con-*

fused Voice, for so the Word signifies, and must be

so interpreted, in order to reconcile it with *Chap.*

xxii. Ver. 9. where *Saul*, giving an Account of

these Men, tells *Agrippa*,--- *They heard not the*

Voice of him that spake to me.--- They heard a

Voice, a confused Noise, but not the articulate

Voice of him that spake to *Saul*, and therefore

remained unconverted.--- For what are all *Ordinances*,

all even the most extraordinary Dispensations

of Providence, without *Christ* speaks to the Soul

in them?----- Thus it is now under the Word

preached:--- Many, like *Saul's* Companions, are

sometimes so struck with the Outgoings of God

appearing in the Sanctuary, that they even stand

speechless;--- They hear the Preacher's Voice, but

not the Voice of the Son of God, who perhaps at

the same Time is speaking effectually to many

other Hearts.--- This I have known often.--- And

what shall we say to these Things? Oh the Depth

of the Sovereignty of God! 'Tis past finding out.---

Lord, I desire to adore what I cannot comprehend.---

Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy Sight!

But to return to *Saul*:--- The LORD, *Ver. 6.*

bids him *arise* and go into the City.--- And we are told, *Ver. 8.* that SAUL arose from the Earth; and when his Eyes were opened, (he was so overpowered with the Greatness of the Light that shone upon them, that) *he saw no Man, but they led him by the Hand, and brought him into Damascus;* That very City which was to be the Place of his executing or imprisoning the Disciples of the Lord. *And he was (Ver. 9.) three Days without Sight, and neither did eat or drink.*--- But who can tell what Horrors of Conscience, what Convulsions of Soul, what deep and pungent Convictions of Sin he underwent during these three long Days?--- It was this took away his Appetite (for who can eat or drink when under a Sense of the Wrath of God for Sin?) and, being to be greatly employed hereafter, he must be greatly humbled now.--- And therefore the Lord leaves him three Days groaning under the Spirit of Bondage, and buffeted no doubt with the fiery Darts of the Devil, that, being tempted like unto his Brethren, he might be able hereafter to succour those that were tempted.--- Had *Saul* applied to any of the blind Guides of the Jewish Church under these Circumstances, they would have said he was mad or going besides himself, as many carnal Teachers and blind Pharisees now deal with, and so more and more distress, poor Souls labouring under awakening Convictions of their damnable State.--- But God often at our first Awakenings visits us with sore Trials, especially those who are, like *Saul*, to shine in the Church, and to be used as Instruments in bringing many Sons to Glory:--- Those who are to be highly exalted, must first be deeply humbled.--- And this I speak for the Comfort of such who may be now groaning

groaning under the Spirit of Bondage, and perhaps, like *Saul*, can neither eat nor drink; for I have generally observed, that those who have had the deepest Convictions, have afterwards been favoured with the most precious Communications, and enjoyed most of the Divine Presence in their Souls.--- This was afterwards remarkably exemplified in *Saul*, who was now three Days without Sight, and neither did eat nor drink.

But will the Lord leave his poor Servant in this Distress? No; his Jesus (tho' *Saul* persecuted him) promised (and he will perform) that it *should be told him what he must do.*--- *And there was* (Ver. 10.) *a certain Disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and unto him said the Lord in a Vision, Ananias.*--- *And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord.*--- Oh what a holy Familiarity is there between Jesus Christ and regenerate Souls!--- *Ananias* had been used to such Love-visits, and therefore knew the Voice of his Beloved.--- The Lord says, *Ananias, Ananias* says, *Behold, I am here, Lord.*--- Thus it is that Christ now, as well as formerly, often talks with his Children at sundry Times and after divers Manners, as a Man talketh with his Friend,--- But what has the Lord to say to *Ananias*?

Ver. 11. *And the Lord said unto him, Arise and go into the Street which is called STRAIGHT, and enquire in the House of Judas, for one called Saul of Tarsus* (see here for your Comfort, O Children of the most high God, what Notice Jesus Christ takes of the Street and the House where his own dear Servants lodge) *for Behold, he prayeth.*--- But why is this usher'd in with the Word *Behold!* What, was it such a Wonder, to hear that *Saul* was praying! Why, *Saul* was a *Pharisee*,

and therefore, no doubt, fasted and made long Prayers:— And, since we are told that he profited above many of his Equals, I doubt not but he was taken notice of for his Gift in Prayer. And yet it seemed before these three Days *Saul* never prayed in his Life;— And why? Because, before these three Days, he never felt himself a *condemned* Creature:— He was alive in his own Opinion, because without a Knowledge of the spiritual Meaning of the Law; he felt not a Want of, and therefore before now cried not after, a Jesus; and consequently, tho' he might have said or made a Prayer (as many Pharisees do now-a-days) he never prayed a Prayer.— But now, Behold! he *prayeth indeed*.— And this was urged as one Reason why he was converted.— None of God's Children, as one observes, come into the World still-born;— Prayer is the very Breath of the New Creature: And therefore, if we are Prayerless, we are Christless;— If we never had the Spirit of Supplication, it is a sad Sign that we never had the Spirit of Grace in our Souls: And you may be assured you never did pray, unless you have felt yourselves damnable Sinners, and the Want of Jesus to be your Saviour.— May the Lord, whom I serve in the Gospel of his dear Son, prick you all to the Heart, and may it be said of you all, as it was of *Saul*, Behold, they pray!

The Lord goes on to encourage *Ananias* to go to *Saul*;— For, says he, *Ver. 12. he hath seen in a Vision a Man named Ananias, coming in, and putting his Hand on him, that he might receive his Sight.*— So that tho' Christ converted *Saul* immediately by himself, yet he will carry on the Work, thus begun, by a Minister.— Happy they who under-

der Soul-troubles have such experienced Guides, and as well acquainted with Jesus Christ as *Ananias* was : — You that have such, Oh make much of and be thankful for them ; — And you that have them not, trust in God ; — He will carry on his own Work without them.

Doubtless, *Ananias* was a good Man ; but shall I commend him for his Answer to our Lord ? I commend him not : — For says he, *Ver. 13. Lord, I have heard by many of this Man, how much Evil he hath done to thy Saints at Jerusalem : And here, Ver. 14. he hath Authority from the Chief Priests to bind all that call upon thy Name.* — I fear this Answer proceeded from some Relicks of Self-righteousness, as well as Infidelity, that lay undiscovered in the Heart of *Ananias*. — *Arise,* says our Lord, *and go into the Street which is called Straight, and enquire in the House of Judas, for one called Saul of Tarsus ; for behold, he prayeth !* One would think this was sufficient to satisfy him. But says *Ananias*, *Lord, I have heard by many of this Man* (he seems to speak of him with much Contempt ; for even good Men are apt to think too contemptuously of those who are yet in their Sins) *how much Evil he hath done to thy Saints in Jerusalem : And here he hath Authority from the Chief Priests, to bind all that call upon thy Name.* —

And what then, *Ananias* ? Is any Thing too hard for the Lord ? Who made thee to differ ? May not he who converted thee, convert him also ? Surely *Ananias* here forgets himself, or perhaps fears, lest this Man, who had Authority from the Chief Priests to bind all that call upon Christ's Name, should bind him also, if he went unto him. — But the Lord silences all Objections with a

Go thy Way; Ver. 15. *For he is a chosen Vessel unto me, to bear my Name before the Gentiles, and Kings, and the Children of Israel. --- For I will shew him (Ver. 16.) how great Things he must suffer for my Name's Sake.* --- Here God stops his Mouth immediately, by asserting his Sovereignty, and preaching to him the Doctrine of *Election*. --- And the frequent Conversion of notorious Sinners to God, to me is one great Proof, amongst a Thousand others, of that precious, but too much exploded and sadly misrepresented, Doctrine of God's *electing Love*. --- For whence is it that such are taken, whilst Thousands, not near so vile, die senseless and stupid? All the Answer that can be given is, *They are chosen Vessels*; --- *Go thy Way*, says God, *for he is a chosen Vessel unto me, to bear my Name before the Gentiles, and Kings, and the Children of Israel: --- For I will shew him how great Things he must suffer for my Name's Sake.* --- Observe what a close Connection there is between Doing and Suffering for *Christ*. --- If any of my Brethren in the Ministry are present, let them hear what Preferment we must expect, if we are called out to work remarkably for God: --- Not great Prebendaries or Bishopricks, but great Sufferings for our Lord's Name's Sake; -- These are the Fruits of our Labour: And he that will not contentedly suffer great Things for preaching *Christ*, is not worthy of him. --- Suffering will be found to be the best Preferment, when we are called to give an Account of our Ministry at the great Day.

I do not hear *Ananias* quarrelling with God concerning the Doctrine of *Election*. No; (Oh that all good Men would in this learn of him!) *He went his Way, (Ver. 17.) and entred into the House;*

*House ; and put his Hands on him, and said, Brother Saul. Just now 'twas this Man ; --- Now it is Brother Saul : --- For 'tis no Matter what a Man has been, if he be now a Christian ; --- The same should be our Brother, our Sister and Mother, God blots out every Convert's Transgressions as with a thick Cloud, and so should we. --- The more vile a Man has been, the more should we love him when believing on Christ, because Christ will be more glorified on his Behalf. --- I doubt not but Ananias was wonderfully delighted to hear that so remarkable a Persecutor was brought home to God : --- I am perswaded he felt his Soul immediately united to him by Love, and therefore addresses him not with, *Thou Persecutor, Thou Murderer*, that camest to butcher me and my Friends ; but, *Brother Saul*. --- 'Tis remarkable that the primitive Christians much used the Word *Brother* and *Brethren*. --- I know 'tis a Term now much in Reproach ; but those who despise it, I believe, would be glad to be of our Brotherhood, when they see us sitting at the Right-hand of the Majesty on High. --- *Brother Saul, The Lord (even Jesus that appeared unto thee in the Way as thou camest) hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy Sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. ---* At this Time, we may suppose, he laid his Hands upon him. See the Consequences.*

Ver. 18. *Immediately there fell from his Eyes as it had been Scales, and he received Sight forthwith ; not only bodily, but spiritual Sight. --- He immersed as it were into a new World. --- He saw, and felt too, Things unutterable : --- He felt a Union of his Soul with God ; --- He received the Spirit of Adoption ; --- He could now, with a full*
Assurance

Assurance of Faith, cry, *Abba, Father.*--- Now was he filled with the Holy Ghost;--- Now was he filled with the *Love of God shed abroad* in his Heart;--- Now were the Days of his Mourning ended;--- Now was Christ formed in his Soul;--- Now he could give Men and Devils the Challenge, knowing that Christ had justified him;--- Now he saw the Excellencies of Christ, and esteemed him the *fairest among Ten thousand.*--- You only know how to sympathize with the Apostle in his Joy, who, after a long Night of Bondage, have been set free by the Spirit, and have received Joy in the Holy Ghost.--- May all that are now mourning, as *Saul* was, be comforted in like Manner!

The Scales then are now removed from the Eyes of *Saul's* Mind; *Ananias* has done that for him, under God: He must now do another Office, *viz.* baptize him, and to receive him into the visible Church of Christ.--- A good Proof to me of the Necessity of Baptism where it may be had:--- For I find here, as well as elsewhere, that Baptism is administred even to those who had received the Holy Ghost.--- *Saul* was convinced of this, and therefore arose and was baptized.--- And now it is Time for him to recruit the outward Man, which, by three Days Abstinence and spiritual Conflicts, had been much impaired:--- We are therefore told, (Ver. 19.) *when he had received Meat, he was strengthened.*

But Oh, with what Comfort did the Apostle now eat his Food!--- I am sure it was with Singleness, I am perswaded also with Gladness, of Heart.--- And why? He *knew* that he was reconciled to God.--- And, for my own part, did I not know how blind and flinty our Hearts are by Nature,

ture, I should wonder how any one could eat even his common Food with any Satisfaction, who has not some well-grounded Hope of his being reconciled to God.—Our Lord intimates thus much to us:—For in his glorious Prayer, after he has taught us to pray for our daily Bread, immediately adds that Petition, *Forgive us our Trespases*;—As tho' our daily Bread would do us no Service, unless we were sensible of having the Forgiveness of our Sins.

To proceed: *Saul* hath now received Meat, and is strengthened. And whither will he go now? To see the Brethren.—*Then was Saul certain Days with the Disciples that were at Damascus.*—For, if we know and love Christ, we shall also love and desire to be acquainted with the Brethren of Christ.—We may generally know a Man by his Company. And tho' all are not Saints that associate with Saints (for Tares will be always springing up amongst the Wheat till the Time of Harvest) yet if we never keep Company, but are shy and ashamed of the despised Children of God, 'tis a certain Sign we have not yet experimentally learn'd Jesus, or received him into our Hearts.—My dear Friends, be not deceived;—If we are Friends to the Bridegroom, we shall be Friends to the Children of the Bridegroom. *Saul*, as soon as he was filled with the Holy Ghost, *was certain Days with the Disciples that were at Damascus.*

But who can tell what Joy these Disciples felt when *Saul* came amongst them! I suppose holy *Ananias* introduced him.—Methinks I see the once persecuting Zealot, when they came to salute him with a holy Kiss, throwing himself upon each of their Necks, weeping over them with Floods of Tears,

Tears, and saying, "O my Brother, O my Sister, "Can you forgive me? Can you give such a "Wretch as I the Right-hand of Fellowship, who "intended to drag you behind me bound unto *Jerusalem!*"—Thus, I say, we may suppose *Saul* addressed himself to his now Fellow-disciples; and I doubt not but they were as ready to forgive and forget as *Ananias* was, and saluted him with the endearing Title of *Brother Saul*.—Lovely was this Meeting; so lovely, that it seemed *Saul* continued certain Days with them, to communicate Experiences, and to learn the Way of God more perfectly; to pray for a Blessing on his future Ministry, and to praise Christ Jesus for what he had done for their Souls.—*Saul* perhaps had sat certain Years at the Feet of *Gamabiel*, but undoubtedly learn'd more these certain Days, than he had learn'd before in all his Life.—It pleases me to think how this great Scholar is transformed by the renewing of his Mind; What a mighty Change was here! That so great a Man as *Saul* was, both as to his Station in Life, and internal Qualifications, and such a bitter Enemy to the Christians; for him, I say, to go and be certain Days with the People of *THIS mad WAY*, and to sit quietly, and be taught of unlearned and illiterate Men, as many of these Disciples we may be sure were; What a substantial Proof was this of the Reality of his Conversion!

What a Hurry and Confusion may we suppose the Chief Priests were in! Now I warrant they were ready to cry out, What, is he also deceived? As for the common People, who knew not the Law, and are accursed, for them to be carried away, is no such Wonder;—But for a Man bred
up

up at the Feet of *Gamaliel*, for such a Scholar, such an Enemy to their Cause as *Saul*, for him to be led away with a Company of silly, deceived Men and Women, surely 'tis impossible! we cannot believe it.--- But *Saul* soon convinces them of the Reality of his becoming a Fool for Christ's Sake:--- For straightway (*Ver. 20.*) instead of going to deliver the Letters from the High Priests, as they expected, in order to bring the Disciples that were at *Damascus* bound to *Jerusalem*, he preached Christ in the Synagogues, that he is the Son of God.--- This was another Proof of his being converted.--- He not only conversed with Christians in private, but he preached Christ publicly in the Synagogues: Especially he insisted on the Divinity of our Lord, proving, notwithstanding his Humiliation, that he was really the Son of God.

But why did *Saul* preach Christ thus? Because he had felt the Power of Christ upon his own Soul.--- And here's the Reason, why Christ is so seldom preached, and his Divinity so slightly insisted on in our Synagogues; 'tis because the Generality of those that pretend to preach him, never felt a saving Work of Conversion upon their own Souls.--- How can they preach, unless they are first taught of, and then sent by, God? *Saul* did not preach Christ before he knew him; no more should any one else.--- An unconverted Minister, tho' he could speak with the Tongues of Men and Angels, will be but as a sounding Brass and tinkling Cymbal to those whose Senses are exercised to discern spiritual Things.--- Ministers that are unconverted, may talk and declaim of Christ, and prove from Books that he is the Son of God; but

but they cannot preach with the Demonstration of the Spirit and with Power, unless they preach from Experience, and have had a Proof of his Divinity, by a Work of Grace wrought upon their own Souls.--- God forgive those, who lay Hands on an unconverted Man, knowing that he is such :--- I would not do it for a Thousand Worlds.--- Lord Jesus, keep thy own faithful Servants pure, and let them not be then Partakers of other Mens Sins.

Such an Instance as *Saul's Conversion* was, we may be assured, must make a great deal of Noise; and therefore no Wonder we are told, *Ver. 21. But all that heard him were amazed, and said, Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this Name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that Intent, that he might bring them bound to the Chief Priests?*

And thus it will be with all that appear publickly for Jesus Christ; and 'tis as impossible for a true Christian to be hid, as a City built upon a Hill.--- Brethren, if you are faithful to, you must be reproached and have Remarks made on you for Christ; especially if you have been remarkably wicked before your Conversion. What (will your Friends say) is not this he, or she, who a little while ago would run to as great Excess of Riot and Vanity as the worst of us all? What has turned your Brain? Or if you have been close, false, formal Hypocrites, as *Saul* was, they will wonder that *you* should be so deceived, as to think you were not in a safe State before; --- As, no doubt, Numbers were surpris'd to hear *Saul*, who was touching the Law blameless, affirm that he was in a damnable Condition (as in all Probability he did) a few Days ago.

Bre-

Brethren, you must expect to meet with many such Difficulties as these; --- The Scourge of the Tongue is generally the first Cross we are called to bear for the Sake of Christ. --- Let not therefore this move you. --- It did not intimidate, no, it rather encouraged *Saul*.

But SAUL, says the Text, *increased the more in Strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ.* --- Opposition never yet did, nor ever will, hurt a sincere Convert. --- Nothing like Opposition, to make the Man of God perfect. --- None but a Hireling, who careth not for the Sheep, will be affrighted at the Approach or Barking of Wolves. --- Christ's Ministers are as bold as Lions; --- It is not for such Men as they to flee.

And therefore (that I may draw towards a Conclusion) let the Ministers and Disciples of Christ learn from *Saul*, not to fear Men or their Revilings, but, like him, increase in Strength, the more wicked Men endeavour to weaken their Hands. --- We cannot be Christians without being opposed. --- No; --- Disciples in general must suffer; --- Ministers in particular must suffer great Things. --- But let not this move any of us from our Stedfastness in the Gospel. --- He that stood by and strengthened *Saul*, will also stand by and strengthen us. He is a God, mighty to save all that put their Trust in him. --- If we look up with an Eye of Faith, we, as well as the first Martyr *Stephen*, may see Jesus standing at the Right-hand of God, ready to assist and protect us. --- Tho' the Lord's Seat is in Heaven, yet he has Respect to his Saints in an especial Manner when suffering here on Earth: --- Then the Spirit of Christ and of Glory rests u-

pon their Souls. And, if I may speak my own Experience, "I never enjoy more rich Communications from God, than when despised and rejected of Men for the Sake of Jesus Christ." However little they may design it, my Enemies are my greatest Friends. --- What I most fear is a Calm; but the Enmity which is in the Hearts of natural Men against Christ, will not suffer them to be quiet long: --- No. As I hope the Work of God will increase, so the Rage of Men and Devils will increase also. --- Let us put on therefore the whole Armour of God. --- Oh! let us not fear the Face of Men: --- Let us fear him only, who can destroy both Body and Soul in Hell; --- I say unto you, let us fear him alone. --- You see how soon God can stop the Fury of his Enemies. --- You have just now heard of a proud, powerful Zealot stopt in his full Career, struck down to the Earth with a Light from Heaven, converted by the almighty Power of efficacious Grace; and thereupon zealously promoting, nay resolutely suffering for, the Faith which once with Threatnings and Slaughters he endeavoured to destroy. --- Let this teach us to pity and pray for our Lord's most inveterate Enemies: --- Who knows but, in answer thereunto, our Lord may give them Repentance unto Life? Most think, that Christ had Respect to *Stephen's* Prayer, when he converted *Saul*. --- Perhaps for this Reason God suffers his Adversaries to go on, that his Goodness and Power may shine more bright in their Conversion. --- But let not the Persecutors of Christ take Encouragement from this to continue in their Opposition. --- Remember, tho' *Saul* was converted, yet the High Priest and *Saul's* Companions were left dead in Trespasses and Sins: And

And, if this should be your Case, you will of all Men be most miserable ; — for Persecutors have the lowest Place in Hell. And, if *Saul* was struck to the Earth by a Light from Heaven, how will you be able to stand before Jesus Christ, when he comes in terrible Majesty to take Vengeance on all those who have persecuted his Gospel ? — Then the Question, *Why persecutest thou me ?* will cut you through and through. — The secret Enmity of your Hearts shall be then detected before Men and Angels, and you shall be doomed to dwell in the Blackness of Darkness for evermore. — Kiss the Son therefore, lest he be angry ; — for even you may yet find Mercy, if you believe on the Son of God : — Tho' you persecute him, yet he will be your Jesus. — I cannot despair of any of you, when I find a *Saul* among the Disciples at *Damascus*. — What tho' your Sins are as Scarlet, the Blood of Christ shall wash them as white as Snow. — Having much to be forgiven, despair not ; only believe, and like *Saul*, of whom I have now been speaking, love much. — He counted himself the chiefest Sinner of all, and therefore laboured more abundantly than all. Who is there among you fearing the Lord ? Whose Hearts hath the Lord now opened to hear-ken to the Voice of his poor unworthy Servant ? — Surely the Lord will not let me preach in vain. — Who is the happy Soul that is this Day to be washed in the Blood of the Lamb ? Will no poor Sinner take Encouragement from *Saul* to come to Jesus Christ ? You are all thronging round about, but which of you will touch the Lord Jesus ? What a Comfort will it be to *Saul*, and to your own Souls, when you meet him in Heaven, to tell him, that hearing of his, was a Means, under

I 2 God,

God, of your Conversion! Doubtless it was written for the Encouragement of all poor returning Sinners: — He himself tells us so; for *in me*, says he, *God shewed all Long-suffering, that I might be an Example to them that should hereafter believe.* — Was *Saul* here himself, he would tell you so, — indeed he would; but, being dead, by this Account of his Conversion he yet speaketh. — Oh that God may speak by it to your Hearts! Oh that the Arrows of God might this Day stick fast in your Souls, and you were made to cry out, — *Who art thou, Lord?* Are there any such amongst you? Methinks I feel something of what this *Saul* felt, when he said, *I travail in Birth again for you, till Christ be formed again in your Hearts.* — O come, come away to Jesus, on whom *Saul* believed; and then I care not if the High Priests issue out never so many Writs of Indictments, or injuriously drag me to a Prison: — The Thoughts of being instrumental in saving you, will make me sing Praises even at Midnight; — And I know you will be my Joy and Crown of Rejoicing, when I am delivered from this earthly Prison, and meet you in the Kingdom of God hereafter.

Now to God, &c.

SER.

S E R M O N VI.

CHRIST, the Believer's Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption.

I COR. i. 30.

But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption.

OF all the Verses in the Book of God, this which I have now read to you is, I believe, one of the most comprehensive.—What glad Tidings does it bring to Believers! What precious Privileges are they herein invested with! How are they here led to the Fountain of them all, I mean, the Love, the everlasting Love of God the Father!—Of whom are you in Christ Jesus, *who of God is made unto us, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption.*

Without referring you at present to the Context, I shall from these Words,

First, Point out to you the Fountain from which all those Blessings flow, which the Elect of God partake of in Jesus Christ;—*Who of God is made unto us.*—

Secondly, I shall consider what those Blessings are, *viz. Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption.*

And, *First*, I would point out to you the Fountain from which all those Blessings flow, which the Elect of God partake of in Jesus ;--- *Who of God is made unto us*, i. e. God the Father, for he it is that is spoken of here.--- Not as tho' Jesus Christ was not God as well as he :--- But God the Father is the Fountain of the Deity ; and, if we consider Jesus Christ acting as Mediator, God the Father is greater than he.--- There was an eternal Contract between the Father and the Son :--- *I have made*, says God, *a Covenant with my Chosen, and I have sworn unto David my Servant* ; which *David* was a Type of Christ, with whom the Father made a Covenant, that if he would obey and suffer, and make himself a Sacrifice for Sin, he should see his Seed, he should prolong his Days, and the Pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his Hands.----- This Compact our Lord refers to, in that glorious Prayer recorded in the 17th Chapter of *John* ; and therefore he prays for, or rather demands with a full Assurance, all that were given to him by the Father :--- *Father*, says he, *I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am*.--- For this same Reason the Apostle breaks out into Praising God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ;--- for he loved the Elect with an everlasting Love, 'or, as our Lord expresses it, *before the Foundation of the World*.--- And therefore, to shew them to what they were beholden for their Salvation, our Lord, in the 25th of *Matthew*, represents himself, saying, *Come, ye blessed Children of my Father, receive the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World*.--- And thus, in Reply to the Mother of *Zebedee's Children*, he says, *It is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them*

them for whom it is prepared of the Father.—The Apostle therefore, when here speaking of the Christian's Privileges, lest they should sacrifice to their own Drag, or think their Salvation was owing to their own Faithfulness, or Improvement of their own Free-will, reminds them to look back on the everlasting Love of God the Father ;--- *Who of God is made unto us, &c.*

Would to God this Point of Doctrine was considered more, and People were more studious of the *Covenant of Redemption* between the Father and the Son ! We should then not have so much Disputing against the Doctrine of Election, or hear it condemned (even by good Men) as a Doctrine of Devils.--- For my own Part, I cannot see how true Humbleness of Mind can be attained without a Knowledge of it.--- And tho' I will not say, that every one who denies Election is a bad Man, yet I will say, with that sweet Singer Mr. *Trail*, It is a very bad Sign.--- Such a one, whoever he be, I think cannot truly know himself: For, if we deny Election, we must (say what we will) partly at least, glory in ourselves for suffering Christ to redeem and save us ;--- But our Redemption is so ordered, that no Flesh should glory in the Divine Presence.--- And hence it is that the Pride of Man opposes this Doctrine, because according to this Doctrine, and no other, *he that glories, must glory only in the Lord.*--- But what shall I say ? Election is a Mystery that shines with such resplendent Brightness, that, to make use of the Words of one who has drank deeply of Electing Love, it dazzles the weak Eyes even of some of God's dear Children.--- However, tho' they know it not, all the Blessings they receive, all the Privileges they do

or will enjoy, thro' Jesus Christ, flow from the everlasting Love of God the Father : *But of him are you in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption.*

What these Blessings are, which are here thro' Christ made over to the Elect, I come in the next Place to consider.

And, *First*, Christ is made to them *Wisdom*.--- But wherein does *true Wisdom* consist ? Was I to ask some of you, perhaps you would say, In indulging the Lust of the Flesh, and saying to your Souls, Eat, drink, and be merry.--- But this is only the Wisdom of Brutes;---they have as good a Gust and Relish for sensual Pleasures, as the greatest *Epicure* on the Earth.---- Others would tell me, *True Wisdom* consisted in adding House to House, and Field to Field, and calling Lands after their own Names.--- But this cannot be *true Wisdom* ; for Riches often take themselves Wings, and fly away, like an Eagle towards Heaven.----- Even *Wisdom itself* assures us, *That a Man's Life doth not consist in the Abundance of the Things which he possesses*.--- Vanity, Vanity, all these Things are Vanity.--- For, if Riches leave not the Owner, the Owners must soon leave them ;--- *For rich Men must also die, and leave their Riches for others.* Their Riches cannot procure them a Redemption from the Grave, whither we are all hastning apace. But perhaps you despise Riches and Pleasure, and therefore place Wisdom in the Knowledge of Books :--- But it is possible for you to tell the Numbers of the Stars, and call them all by their Names, and yet be mere Fools.----- Learned Men are not always wise ; --- Nay, our common Learning

ing, so much cried up, makes Men only so many accomplished Fools.--- To keep you therefore no longer in Suspense, and withal to humble you, I will send you to an Heathen to School, to learn what *true Wisdom* is : --- "*Know thyself*," was a Saying of one of the wise Men of *Greece*.--- This is certainly *true Wisdom*, and this is that Wisdom spoken of in the Text, and which Jesus Christ is made to all Elect Sinners.--- They are made to know themselves, so as not to think more highly of themselves than they ought to think.--- Before they were Darknes, now they are Light in the Lord ; and in that Light they see their own Darknes.--- They now bewail that they are fallen Creatures by Nature, dead in Trespasses and Sins, Sons and Heirs of Hell, and Children of Wrath.--- They now see that all their Righteousnesses are but as filthy Rags ; that there is no Health in their Souls ; that they are poor and miserable, blind and naked ; and that there is no Name given under Heaven, whereby they can be saved, but that of Jesus Christ.--- They see the Necessity of closing with a Saviour, and the Wisdom of God in appointing him to be a Saviour.--- They are also made willing to accept of Salvation upon our Lord's own Terms, and to receive him as their All in all.--- Thus Christ is made to them *Wisdom*.

Secondly, Righteousness. --- Who of God is made unto us, Wisdom, Righteousness ; --- i. e. Christ's whole personal Righteousness is made over to, and accounted theirs. --- Being enabled to lay hold on Christ by Faith, God the Father blots out their Transgressions, as with a thick Cloud ; their Sins, their Iniquities, he remembers no more. --- They are made the Righteousness of God in Christ
Jesus,

Jesus, who is the End of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believeth. --- In one Sense, now God sees no Sin in them ; --- The whole Covenant of Works is fulfilled in them ; --- They are actually justified, acquitted, and looked upon as Righteous in the Sight of God ; --- They are perfectly accepted in the Beloved ; --- They are compleat in him ; --- The flaming Sword of God's Wrath, which before moved every Way, is now removed, and free Access given to the Tree of Life ; --- They are enabled now to reach out the Arm of Faith, and pluck, and live for evermore. --- Hence it is that the Apostle, under a Sense of this blessed Privilege, breaks out into this triumphant Language ; --- *It is Christ that justifies, who is he that condemns me ?* Does Sin condemn ? Christ's Righteousness delivers Believers from the Guilt of it : --- Christ is their *Jesus*, their *Saviour*, and is become a Propitiation for their Sins. --- Who therefore shall lay any Thing to the Charge of God's Elect ? Does the Law condemn ? --- By having Christ's Righteousness imputed to them, they are dead to the Law, as a Covenant of Works ; Christ has fulfilled it for them, and in their stead. --- Does Death threaten them ? They need not fear : --- The Sting of Death is Sin, the Strength of Sin is the Law ; but God has given them Victory, by imputing to them the Righteousness of the Lord Jesus.

And what a Privilege is here ! Well might the Angels at the Birth of Christ say to the humble Shepherds, "*Behold, I bring you glad Tidings of great Joy.*" For unto you that believe in Christ, *a Saviour is born.* And well may they rejoice at the Conversion of poor Sinners : --- For the Lord

is their Righteousness; --- They have Peace with God, thro' Faith in Christ's Blood, and shall never enter into Condemnation. --- Oh Believers ! (for this Discourse is intended in a special Manner for you) lift up your Heads ; --- *Rejoice in the Lord always ; Again I say, Rejoice.* --- Christ is made to you of God Righteousness ; What then should you fear ? You are made the Righteousness of God in him. --- You may be called, *The Lord our Righteousness.* --- Of what then should you be afraid ? What shall separate you henceforward from the Love of Christ ? Shall Tribulation, or Distress, or Persecution, or Famine, or Nakedness, or Peril, or Sword ? No ; I am perswaded neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor Things present, nor Things to come, nor Height, nor Depth, nor any other Creature, shall be able to separate you from the Love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, who of God is made unto you *Righteousness.* ---

This is a glorious Privilege, but this is only the Beginning of the Happiness of Believers : --- Christ is not only made to them Righteousness, but *Sanctification.* --- By Sanctification, I do not mean a bare hypocritical Attendance on outward Ordinances (tho' rightly-inform'd Christians will think it their Duty and Privilege constantly to attend on all outward Ordinances :) Nor do I mean by Sanctification, a bare outward Reformation, and a few transient Convictions, or a little legal Sorrow ; for all this an unsanctified Man may have. --- But, by Sanctification, I mean a total Renovation of the whole Man. --- By the Righteousness of Christ, Believers become legally, by Sanctification they are made spiritually, alive : --- By one they are entitled

tled to, by the other made meet for, Glory. — They are sanctified therefore throughout, in Spirit, Soul and Body.

Their Understandings, which were before dark, now become Light in the Lord ; and their Wills, before contrary to, now become one with, the Will of God : — Their Affections are now set on Things above : — Their Memory is now filled with Divine Things : — Their natural Consciences are now enlightened : — Their Members, which were before Instruments of Uncleaness, and of Iniquity unto Iniquity, are now Instruments of Righteousness and true Holiness. — In short, they are new Creatures ; — Old Things are passed away, all Things are become new in their Hearts. — Sin has now no longer Dominion over them ; — They are freed from the Power, tho' not the Indwelling and Being, of it. — They are holy both in Heart and Life, even in all Manner of Conversation. — They are made Partakers of a Divine Nature : — And from Jesus Christ they receive Grace for Grace ; and every Grace that is in Christ, is copied and transcribed into their Souls. --- They are transformed into his Likeness ; — He is formed within them ; -- They dwell in him, and he in them. --- They are led by, and bring forth the Fruits of his Spirit. -- They know that Christ is their *Emmanuel*, God with and in them. --- They are living Temples of the Holy Ghost. --- And therefore, being a holy Habitation unto the Lord, the whole Trinity dwells and walks in them. Even here, they sit together with Christ in heavenly Places, and are *vitally* united to him their Head by a living Faith. Their Redeemer, their Maker, is their Husband : They are Flesh of his Flesh, Bone of his Bone : --
They

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They *talk*, they *walk* with him, as a Man talketh and walketh with his Friend.--- In short, they are one with Christ, even as Jesus Christ and the Father are one.

Thus is Christ made to Believers *Sanctification*. And oh what a Privilege is this ! To be changed from Beasts into Saints, from a devilish into a Divine Nature ; --- To be thus translated from the Kingdom of *Satan*, into the Kingdom of God's dear Son ! --- To put off the old Man which is corrupt, and thus to put on the new Man, which is created after God in Righteousness and true Holiness ; --- Oh, what an unspeakable Blessing is this ! I almost stand amazed at the Contemplation of it.--- Well might the Apostle exhort Believers to rejoice in the Lord : Indeed they have Reason always to rejoice, yea, to rejoice in their Beds ; for the Kingdom of God is in them ; they are changed from Glory to Glory, even by the Spirit of the Lord.--- Well may this be a Mystery to the natural, for it is a Mystery even to the spiritual Man himself, a Mystery which he cannot fathom.--- Does it not often dazzle your Eyes, O ye Children of God, to look at your own Brightness, when the Candle of the Lord shines out, and your Redeemer lifts up the Light of his blessed Countenance upon your Souls ? --- Are not you astonished, when you feel the Love of God shed abroad in your Hearts abundantly by the Holy Ghost, and God holds out the Golden Sceptre of his Mercy, and bids you ask what you will, and it shall be given you ? --- Does not that Peace of God, which keeps and rules your Hearts, surpass the utmost Limits of your Understandings ? --- And is not the Joy you feel unspeakable ? Is it not full

full of Glory? I am perswaded it is; and in your secret Communion, when the Lord flows in upon your Souls, you are as it were swallowed up in, or, to use the Apostle's Phrase, *filled with all the Fulness of God*.---Are not you ready to cry out with Solomon, *And will the Lord indeed dwell thus with Men! How is it that we should be thus thy Sons and Daughters, O Lord Almighty!*

If you are Children of God, and know what it is to have Fellowship with the Father and the Son;—If you walk by Faith, and not by Sight; I am assured this is frequently the Language of your Hearts.

But look forward, and see an unbounded Prospect of eternal Happiness lying before thee, O Believer! What thou hast already received, are only the First-fruits, like the Clustre of Grapes brought out of the Land of *Canaan*; only an Earnest and Pledge of yet infinitely better Things to come:—The Harvest is yet to follow; thy Grace is hereafter to be swallowed up in Glory.---Thy great *Joshua*, thy great High Priest, shall administer an abundant Entrance unto thee into the Land of Promise, that Rest which awaits the Children of God:—For Christ is not only made to Believers, *Wisdom, Righteousness, and Sanctification*, but also *Redemption*.

But, before we enter upon the Explanation and Contemplation of this Privilege, from what has been said, we may, *First*, Learn the great Mistake of Archbishop *Tillotson*, and Writers of his Stamp, who, notwithstanding they talk of Sanctification and inward Holiness (as indeed sometimes they do, tho' in a very loose and superficial Manner) yet they generally make it the *Cause*, whereas they should

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should consider it as the *Effect*, of our Justification. — Of whom *are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us, Wisdom, Righteousness, and then Sanctification.* — For Christ's Righteousness, or that which Christ has done in our stead without us, is the sole Cause of our Acceptance in the Sight of God, and of all Holiness wrought in us. — To this, and not to the Light within, or any Thing wrought within, should poor Sinners seek for Justification in the Sight of God. — For the Sake of Christ's Righteousness alone, and not any Thing wrought in us, does God look favourably upon us. — Our Sanctification at best in this Life is not compleat: — Tho' we are delivered from the Power, we are not freed from the In-being of Sin. — But not only the Dominion, but the In-being of Sin, is forbidden by the perfect Law of God: — For it is not said, *Thou shalt not give way to Lust*, but, *Thou shalt not lust.* — So that whilst the Principle of Lust remains in the least Degree in our Hearts, tho' we are otherwise never so holy, yet we cannot, on account of that, hope for Acceptance with God. — We must first therefore look for a Righteousness without us, even the Righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ: — For this Reason the Apostle mentions it, and puts it before Sanctification in the Words of the Text. And whosoever teacheth any other Doctrine, doth not preach the Truth as it is in Jesus.

Secondly, From hence also the *Antinomians* and formal Hypocrites may be confuted, who talk of Christ without, but know nothing experimentally of a Work of Sanctification wrought within them. Whatever they may pretend to, since Christ is not in them, the Lord is not their Righteousness, and they

they have no well-grounded Hope of Glory:— For tho' Sanctification is not the Cause, yet it is the Effect of our Acceptance with God; — *Who of God is made unto us Righteousness and Sanctification.*—He therefore, that is really in Christ, is a new Creature.—'Tis not going back to a Covenant of Works, to look into our Hearts, and, seeing that they are changed and renewed, from thence form a comfortable and well-grounded Assurance of the Safety of our States:—No; this is what we are directed to in Scripture; — By our bringing forth the Fruits, we are to judge whether or no we ever did truly partake of the Spirit of God.— *We know, says John, that we are passed from Death unto Life, because we love the Brethren.*— And however we may talk of Christ's Righteousness, and exclaim against legal Preachers; yet, if we are not holy in Heart and Life, if we are not sanctified and renewed by the Spirit in our Minds, we are Self-deceivers, we are only formal Hypocrites: — For we must not put asunder what God has joined together; — We must keep the Medium between the two Extremes. — Not insist so much on the one Hand upon Christ without, as to exclude Christ within, as an Evidence of our being his, and as a Preparation for future Happiness; nor, on the other Hand, so depend on inherent Righteousness or Holiness wrought in us, as to exclude the Righteousness of Jesus Christ without us.

But let us go on, and take a View of the other Link, or rather the End, of the Believer's Golden Chain of Privileges. — But we must look very high; for the Top of it, like *Jacob's Ladder*, reaches Heaven, where all Believers will be drawn up, and placed at the Right-hand of God. —

Who

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Who of God is made unto us, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption.

This is a Golden Chain indeed! — And, what is best of all, not one Link can ever be broken asunder from another. And, was there no other Text in the Book of God, this single one sufficiently proves the final Perseverance of true Believers: — For never did God yet justify a Man, whom he did not sanctify; nor sanctify one, whom he did not compleatly redeem and glorify. — No: As for God, his Way, his Work, is perfect; — He always carried on and finished the Work he begun. — Thus it was in the first, so it is in the new Creation. — When God says, *Let there be Light*, there is Light, that shines more and more unto the perfect Day, when Believers enter into their eternal Rest, as God entred into his. — Those whom God has justified, he has in Effect glorified: — For as a Man's Worthiness was not the Cause of God's giving him Christ's Righteousness, so neither shall his Unworthiness be a Cause of his taking it away; God's Gifts and Callings are without Repentance. — And I cannot think they are clear in the Notion of Christ's Righteousness, who deny the final Perseverance of the Saints; — I fear they understand Justification in that low Sense, which I understood it in a few Years ago, as implying no more than Remission of Sins: — But it not only signifies Remission of Sins past, but also a *fæderal Right* to all good Things to come. — If God has given us his only Son, how shall he not with him freely give us all Things? Therefore the Apostle, after he says, *Who of God is made unto us Righteousness*, does not say, Perhaps he may be made to us Sanctification and Redemp-

tion; but, He is made: — For there is an eternal, indissoluble Connexion between these blessed Privileges. — As the Obedience of Christ is imputed to Believers, so his Perseverance in that Obedience is to be imputed to them also: — And it argues great Ignorance of the Covenant of Grace and Redemption, to object against it. — But to return,

By the Word *Redemption*, we are to understand, not only a compleat Delivery from all Evil, but also a full Enjoyment of all Good both in Body and Soul: — I say, both in Body and Soul; — For the Lord is for the Body. — The Bodies of the Saints in this Life are Temples of the Holy Ghost; — God makes a Covenant with the Dust of Believers; — After Death, tho' Worms destroy them, yet even in their Flesh shall they hereafter see God. — I fear indeed there are some *Sadducees* in our Days, or at least Hereticks, who say either that there is no Resurrection of the Body, or that the Resurrection is past already, namely in our Regeneration: — Hence it is, that our Lord's Coming in the Flesh, at the Day of Judgment, is denied; and consequently we must throw aside the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. For why should we remember the Lord's Death till he comes to Judgment, when he is already come to judge our Hearts, and will not come a second Time? — But all this is only the Reasoning of unlearned, unstable Men, who certainly know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm. — That we must follow our Lord in the Regeneration, and be Partakers of a New Birth, that Christ must come in to our Hearts, we freely confess; and we hope, when speaking of those Things, we speak no more than what we know and feel: — But then it is plain,

plain, that Jesus Christ will come hereafter to Judgment, and that he ascended into Heaven with the Body which he had here on Earth; --- For says he, after his Resurrection, *Handle me, and see; a Spirit has not Flesh and Bones, as you see me have.* And it is plain, that Christ's Resurrection was an Earnest of ours: --- For says the Apostle, *Christ is risen from the Dead, and become the First-fruits of them that sleep; ---* And as in *Adam* all die, and are subject to Mortality; so all that are in Christ, the second *Adam*, who represented Believers as their *federal Head*, shall certainly be made alive, that is, rise again with their Bodies at the last Day.

Here then, O Believers! is one, tho' the lowest, Degree of that Redemption which you are to be Partakers of hereafter; --- I mean, the Redemption of your Bodies: --- For this Corruptible must put on Incorruption, this Mortal must put on Immortality. --- Your Bodies as well as Souls were given to Jesus Christ by the Father; --- They have been Companions in Watching, and Fasting, and Praying: --- Your Bodies therefore, as well as Souls, shall Jesus Christ raise up at the last Day. --- Fear not therefore, O Believers, to look into the Grave; --- for to you it is no other than a consecrated Dormitory, where your Bodies shall sleep quietly till the Morning of the Resurrection. --- When the Voice of the Archangel shall sound, and the Trump of God give the general Alarm, *Arise ye Dead, and come to Judgment;* Earth, Air, Fire, Water, shall give up your scattered Atoms, and both in Body and Soul shall you be ever with the Lord. --- I doubt not but many of you are groining under crazy Carcasses, and complain

often that the mortal Body weighs down the immortal Soul ; — At least this is my Case. — But let us have a little Patience, and we shall be delivered from our earthly Prisons ; — Ere it be long these Tabernacles of Clay shall be dissolved, and we shall be clothed with our House which is from Heaven. — Hereafter our Bodies shall be spiritualized, and shall be so far from hindring our Souls thro' Weakness, that they shall become strong ; — so strong, as to bear up under an exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory. — Others again may have deformed Bodies, emaciated with Sickness, and worn out with Labour and Age : — But wait a little, till your blessed Change by Death comes ; — Then your Bodies shall be renewed and made glorious, like unto Christ's glorious Body : Of which we may form some faint Idea, from the Account given us of our Lord's Transfiguration on the Mount, when it is said, *His Raiment became bright and glistering, and his Face brighter than the Sun.* — Well then may a Believer break out into the Apostle's triumphant Language, — *O Death, where is thy Sting ! — O Grave, where is thy Victory !*

But what is the Redemption of the Body, in Comparison of the Redemption of the better Part, our Souls ? — I must therefore say to you Believers, as the Angel said to *John*, — Come up higher, and let us take as clear a View as we can, at such a Distance, of the Redemption Christ has purchased for, and will shortly put you in actual Possession of. — Already you are justified, already you are sanctified, and thereby freed from the Guilt and Dominion of Sin : — But, as I observed before, the Being and Indwel-

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ing of Sin yet remains in you; — God sees it proper to leave some *Amalekites* in the Land, to keep his *Israel* in Action.--- The most perfect Christian, I am perswaded, must agree, according to one of our Articles, "That the Corruption of Nature remains even in the Regenerate; that the Flesh lusteth always against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh." So that Believers cannot do Things for God with that Perfection they desire.--- This grieves their righteous Souls Day by Day, and with the holy Apostle makes them cry out, "*Who shall deliver us from the Body of this Death!*" I thank God, our Lord Jesus Christ, but not compleatly before the Day of our Dissolution. Then will the very Being of Sin be destroyed, and an eternal Stop put to inbred, indwelling Corruption. And is not this a great Redemption? I am sure Believers esteem it so: --- For there is nothing grieves the Heart of a Child of God so much, as the Remains of indwelling Sin,--- Again, Believers are often in Heaviness thro' manifold Temptations; --- God sees that it is needful and good for them so to be. And tho' they may be highly favoured, and wrapt up in Communion with God, even to the third Heavens; yet a Messenger of Satan is often sent to buffet them, lest they should be puffed up with the Abundance of Revelations.--- But be not weary, be not faint in your Minds: --- The Time of your compleat Redemption draweth nigh.--- In Heaven the wicked One shall cease from troubling you, and your weary Souls shall enjoy an everlasting Rest; --- His fiery Darts cannot reach those blissful Regions: --- Satan will never come any more to appear with, disturb, or accuse the Sons of God, when once the Lord

Jesus Christ shuts the Door.--- Your righteous Souls are now grieved, Day by Day, at the ungodly Conversation of the Wicked ; --- Tares now grow up among the Wheat ; --- Wolves come in Sheeps Clothing : --- But the Redemption spoken of in the Text will free your Souls from all Anxiety on these Accounts.--- Hereafter you shall enjoy a perfect Communion of Saints.--- Nothing that is unholy or unsanctified shall enter into the Holy of Holies, which is prepared for you above : --- This, and all Manner of Evil whatsoever, you shall be delivered from, when your Redemption is hereafter made compleat in Heaven.--- Not only so, but you shall enter into the full Enjoyment of of all Good. --- It is true, all Saints will not have the same Degree of Happiness, but all will be as happy as their Hearts can hold. --- Believers, you shall judge evil, and familiarly converse with good, Angels : --- You shall sit down with *Abraham, Isaac, Jacob*, and all the Spirits of just Men made perfect. --- And to sum up all your Happiness, in one Word, you shall see God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ; --- and, by seeing God, be more and more like him, and pass from Glory to Glory, even to all Eternity.

But I must stop : --- The Glories of the upper World crowd in so fast upou my Soul, that I am lost in the Contemplation of them.--- Brethren, the Redemption spoken of is unutterable ; we cannot here find it out : --- Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, nor has it entred into the Hearts of the most holy Men living, to conceive how great it is. Was I to entertain you whole Ages with an Account of it, when you come to Heaven, you must lay with the Queen of *Sheba*, *Not Half, no, not one* *Thou-*

Thousandth Part was told us. All we can do here is to go upon *Mount Pisgah*, and by the Eye of Faith take a distant View of the promised Land:--- We may see it, as *Abraham* did Christ, afar off, and rejoice in it; but here we only know in part.--- Blessed be God, there is a Time coming, when we shall know God, even as we are known, and God be All in all. "Lord Jesus, accomplish the Number of thine Elect! Lord Jesus, hasten thy Kingdom!"

And now, where are the Scoffers of these last Days, who count the Lives of Christians Madness, and their End to be without Honour? Unhappy Men! you know not what you do. Were your Eyes open, and had you Senses to discern Spiritual Things, you would not speak all Manner of Evil against the Children of God, but you would esteem them as the excellent Ones of the Earth, and envy their Happiness: Your Souls would hunger and thirst after it;---/You also would become Fools for Christ's Sake.--- You boast of Wisdom; so did the Philosophers of *Corinth*:--- But your Wisdom is the Foolishness of Folly in the Sight of God. What will your Wisdom avail you, if it does not make you wise unto Salvation? Can you, with all your Wisdom, propose a more consistent Scheme to build your Hopes of Salvation on, than what has been now laid down before you?--- Can you, with all the Strength of natural Reason, find out a better Way of Acceptance with God, than by the Righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ? Is it right to think your own Works can in any Measure deserve or procure it? If not, Why will you not believe in him? Why will you not submit to his *Righteousness*? Can you deny that you are fallen

Creatures? Do not you find that you are full of Disorders, and that these Disorders make you unhappy? Do not you find that you cannot change your own Hearts? Have you not resolved many and many a Time, and have not your Corruptions yet Dominion over you? Are you not Bond-slaves to your Lusts, and led captive by the Devil at his Will? Why then will you not come to Christ for *Sanctification*? Do you not desire to die the Death of the Righteous, and that your future State may be like theirs? I am perswaded you cannot bear the Thoughts of being annihilated, much less of being miserable for ever. Whatever you may pretend, if you speak Truth, you must confess, that Conscience breaks in upon you in your more sober Intervals whether you will or not, and even constrains you to believe that Hell is no painted Fire. And why then will you not come to Christ? He alone can procure you *everlasting Redemption*.--- Haste, haste away to him, poor beguiled Sinners.--- You lack Wisdom;--- Ask it of Christ: Who knows but he may give it you? He is able;--- For he is the Wisdom of the Father,--- he is that Wisdom which was from Everlasting.--- You have no Righteousness; away to Christ:--- He is the End of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believeth.--- You are unholy;--- flee to the Lord Jesus:--- He is full of Grace and Truth, and of his Fulness all may receive that believe in him.--- You are afraid to die;--- let this drive you to Christ: He has the Keys of Death and Hell;--- in him is *plenteous Redemption*;--- he alone can open the Door which leads to everlasting Life.--- Let not therefore the deceived Reasoner boast any longer of his pretended Reason:--- Whatever you may think,

think, it is the most unreasonable Thing in the World, not to believe on Jesus Christ, whom God hath sent.--- Why, why will you die? Why will you not come unto him, that you may have Life? Oh, every one that thirsteth, come unto the Waters of Life, and drink freely:--- Come, buy without Money and without Price.--- Were these blessed Privileges in the Text to be purchased by Money, you might say, We are poor and cannot buy:--- Or were they to be conferr'd only on Sinners of such a Rank or Degree, then you might say, How can such Sinners as we expect to be so highly favoured? But they are to be freely given of God to the worst of Sinners:--- To us, says the Apostle;--- To me a Persecutor, to you *Corinthians*, who were Unclean, Drunkards, covetous Persons, Idolaters.--- Therefore each poor Sinner may say then, Why not unto me? Has Christ but one Blessing? What if he has blessed Millions, by turning them away from their Iniquities; yet he still continues the same,-- he lives for ever to make Intercession, and therefore will bless you, even you also: Tho', *Esau* like, you have been profane, and hitherto despised your heavenly Father's Birth-right;--- Even now, if you believe, Christ will be made to you of God, *Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption.*

But I must turn again to Believers, for whose Instruction, as I observed before, this Discourse was particularly intended.--- You see, Brethren, Partakers of the heavenly Calling, what great Blessings are treasured up for you in Jesus Christ your Head, and what you are entitled to by believing on his Name:--- Take heed therefore, that ye walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith ye are called.

called.—Think often how highly you are favoured, and remember you have not chosen Christ, but Christ hath chosen you. Put on (as the Elect of God) Humbleness of Mind, and glory, but oh let it be only in the Lord; for you have nothing but what you have received of God.—By Nature ye were as foolish, as legal, as unholy, and in as damnable a Condition as others.—Be pitiful therefore, be courteous; and, as Sanctification is a progressive Work, beware of thinking you have already attained.—Let him that is holy, be holy still; knowing that he who is most pure in Heart, shall hereafter enjoy the clearest Vision of God.—Let indwelling Sin be your daily Burden, and not only bewail and lament, but see that you subdue it daily by the Power of Divine Grace; and look up to Jesus continually to be the Finisher, as well as Author, of your Faith.—Build not on your own Faithfulness, but on God's Unchangeableness.—Take heed of thinking you stand by the Power of your own Free-will.—The everlasting Love of God the Father must be your only Hope and Consolation:—Let this support you under all Trials.—Remember that God's Gifts and Callings are without Repentance;—That Christ, having once loved you, will love you to the End.—Let this constrain you to Obedience, and make you long and look for that blessed Time, when he shall not only be your *Wisdom*, and *Righteousness*, and *Sanctification*, but also compleat and everlasting *Redemption*.

Glory be to God in the Highest.

SERMON VII.

The Pharisee and Publican.

LUKE xviii. 14.

I tell you, this Man went down to his House justified rather than the other; For every one that exalteth himself, shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted.

THOU there be some who dare wholly deny the Lord Jesus, and disbelieve the Revelation he has been pleased to give us, and thereby bring upon themselves swift Destruction; yet I would charitably hope there are but few if any such among you, to whom I am now to *preach the Kingdom of God*.--- Was I to ask you, "How you expect to be justified in the Sight of an offended God?" I suppose you would answer, Only for the Sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.--- But, was I to come more home to your Consciences, I fear most would make the Lord Jesus but in part their Saviour, and go about, as it were, to establish a Righteousness of their own.--- I believe this is not thinking contrary to the Rules of Christian Charity:--- For we are all self-righteous by Nature;--- It is as natural for us to turn back to a Covenant of Works, as for the Sparks to fly upwards.--- We have had so many legal and so few

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Free-grace Preachers for these many Years, that most Professors now seem to be settled upon their Lees, and rather deserve the Title of *Pharisees* than Christians.

Thus it was with the Generality of the People during the Time of our Lord's publick Ministration: And therefore, in almost all his Discourses, he preached the Gospel to poor Sinners, and denounced terrible Woes against proud Self-justiciaries. — The Parable, to which the Words of the Text belong, looks both these Ways: --- For the Evangelist informs us (*Ver. 9.*) that our Lord *spoke it unto certain that trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.* --- And a notable Parable it is; --- A Parable worthy your most serious Attention. --- *He that hath Ears to hear, let him hear what Jesus Christ speaks to all visible Professors in it.*

Ver. 10. “*Two Men, says our Lord, went up to the Temple to pray (and never two Men of more opposite Characters) the one a Pharisee, and the other a Publican.*” — The *Pharisees* were the strictest Sect among the *Jews*. — I was of the strictest Sect of the *Pharisees*, says *Paul*. — They prayed often; not only so, but they made long Prayers; and, that they might appear extraordinary devout, they would pray at the Corners of the Street, where two Ways met, that People going or coming, both Ways might see them. — They made broad, as our Lord informs us, the Borders of their *Phylacteries*, i. e. they had Pieces of Parchment sown to their long Robes (which we are told they wore) on which some Parts of the Scripture were written, that People might from thence infer that they were Lovers of the Law of God.

God. They were very punctual and exact in outward Purifications, so that they washed at their *Going out and Coming in*.---They held the Washing of Pots, brazen Vessels and Tables, and many other such like Things they did.---They were very zealous for the Tradition of the Bathers, and for the Observation of the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, notwithstanding they frequently made void the Law of God by their Traditions.--- And they were so exceeding exact in the outward Observation of the Sabbath, that they condemned our Lord for making a little Clay with his Spittle, and called him a Sinner, and said, He was not of God, because he had given Sight to a Man born blind on the Sabbath-day.---For these Reasons they were had in high Veneration among the People, who were sadly misled by these blind Guides: --- They had therefore the uppermost Places in the Synagogues, and Greetings in the Market-places (which they loved dearly) and were called of Men, *Rabbi, Rabbi*.--- In short, they had such a Reputation for Piety, that it became a Proverb among the *Jews*, that, if there were but *two* Men saved, the one of them must be a *Pharisee*.

As for the *Publicans*, it was not so with them.--- It seems they were sometimes *Jews*, or at least *Profelytes of the Gate*.--- (For we find one here coming up to the Temple.)---But for the Generality I am apt to think they were *Gentiles*; for they were Gatherers of the *Roman Taxes*, and used to amass much Wealth (as appears by the Confession of *Zaccheus*, one of the Chief of them) by wronging Men by false Accusation. They were so universally infamous, that our Lord himself tells his Disciples, the excommunicated Man should be to them

them as a *Heathen Man*, or a *Publican*. — And the *Pharisees* thought it a sufficient Impeachment of our Lord's Character, that he was a *Friend to Publicans and Sinners*, and went to sit down with them at Meat.

But, however they disagreed in other Things, they agreed in this, *viz.* that publick Worship is a Duty incumbent upon all: For they both came up to the Temple. — The very Heathens were Observers of Temple-worship. We have very early Notice of Mens sacrificing to, and calling upon the Name of the Lord in the Old Testament; and I find it nowhere contradicted in the New. — Our Lord and his Apostles went up to the Temple; and we are commanded by the Apostle, *not to forsake the assembling ourselves together*, as the Manner of too many is in our Days; and such too, as would have us think well of them, tho' they seldom or never tread the Courts of the Lord's House. — But, tho' our Devotions begin in our Closets, they must not end there. — And, if People never shew their Devotions abroad, I must suspect they have little or none at home." — "*Two Men went up to the Temple.*" And what went they thither for? Not (as Multitudes amongst us do) to make the House of God a *House of Merchandise*, or turn it into a *Den of Thieves*; much less to ridicule the Preacher, or disturb the Congregation. No; they came to the Temple, says our Lord, *to pray*. For thither should the Tribes of God's *spiritual Israel* go up, to talk with, and pour out their Hearts before, the mighty God of *Jacob*.

"*Two Men went up to the Temple to pray.*" — I fear one of them forgot his Errand. — I have often

often been at a Loss what to call the *Pharisee's* Address; — It certainly does not deserve the Name of a Prayer. — He may rather be said to come to the Temple to boast, than to *pray*: — For I do not find one Word of Confession of his original Guilt; — Not one single Petition for Pardon of his past actual Sins, or for Grace to help and assist him for the Time to come: — He only brings in God, as it were, a Reckoning of his Performances; and does that, which no Flesh can justly do. I mean, glory in his Presence.

Ver. 11. *The Pharisee stood, and prayed thus with himself; God I thank thee that I am not as other Men are, Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers, or even as this Publican.*

Our Lord first takes Notice of his Posture; — *The Pharisee stood, &c.* He is not to be condemned for that; for Standing, as well as Kneeling, is a proper Posture for Prayer. — When you *stand praying*, says our Lord. — Tho' sometimes our Lord kneeled, nay, lay flat on his Face upon the Ground. — His Apostles also kneeled, as we read in the *Acts*. — Which has made me wonder at some, who are so bigotted to standing in Family as well as publick Prayer, that they will not kneel, notwithstanding all kneel that are around them. I fear there is something of the *Pharisee* in this Conduct. — Kneeling and Standing are indifferent, if the Knee of the Soul be bent, and the Heart upright towards God. We should study not to be particular in indifferent Things, lest we offend weak Minds. — What the *Pharisee* is remarked for, is his *standing by himself*: — For the Words may be rendred, he stood *by himself* upon some eminent Place, at the upper Part of the Temple, near the

the *Holy of Holies*, that the Congregation might see what a devout Man he was : — Or it may be understood as we read it ; he prayed by himself, or of himself, out of his own Heart. — He did not pray by Form ; it was an *extempore* Prayer : — For there are many *Pharisees* that pray and preach too *extempore*. — I do not see why these may not be acquired, as well as other Arts and Sciences. — A Man, with a good Elocution, ready Turn of Thought, and good Memory, may repeat his own or other Mens Sermons, and, by the Help of a *Wilkins* or *Henry*, may pray seemingly excellently well, and yet not have the least Grain of true Grace in his Heart. — And I speak this, not to cry down *extempore* Prayer, or to discourage those dear Souls that really pray by the Spirit ; I only would hereby give a Word of Reproof to those who are so bigotted to *extempore* Prayer, that they condemn, at least judge, all that use Forms, as tho' not so holy and heavenly as others who pray without them. — Alas ! this is wrong. — Not every one that prays *extempore* is a spiritual, nor every one that prays with a Form a formal Man. — Let us not judge one another. — Let not him that uses a Form, judge him that prays *extempore*, on that Account ; and let not him that prays *extempore*, despise him that uses a Form. — *The Pharisee stood and prayed thus by himself* : — Which may signify also praying inwardly in his Heart ; for there is a Way (and that an excellent one too) of praying when we cannot speak. — Thus *Anna* prayed when she spoke not out aloud, only her Lips moved. — Thus God says to *Moses*, *Why criest thou ?* when, it is plain, he did not speak a Word. This is what the Apostle means by the *Spirit making Intercession*

son for Believers, with Gronings which cannot be uttered. For there are Times when the Soul is too big to speak; when God fills it as it were, and overshadows it with his Presence, so that it can only fall down, worship, adore, and ly in the Dust before the Lord.--- Again, there is a Time when the Soul is benumbed, barren and dry, and the Believer has not a Word to say to his dear heavenly Father; and then the Heart only can speak. And I mention this for the Encouragement of weak Christians, who think they never are accepted but when they have a Flow of Words, and fancy they do not please God at the Bottom, for no other Reason but because they do not please themselves. Such would do well to consider, that God knows the Language of the Heart, and the Mind of the Spirit; and that we make use of Words, not to inform God, but to affect ourselves.--- Whenever therefore any of you find yourselves in such a Frame, be not discouraged:--- Offer yourselves up in Silence before God, as Clay in the Hands of the Potter, for him to write and stamp his own Divine Image upon your Souls.---But I believe the Pharisee knew nothing of this Way of Prayer:--- He was self-righteous, a Stranger to the Divine Life; and therefore either of the former Explanations may be best put upon these Words.--- "*He stood, and prayed thus with himself; God I thank thee that I am not as other Men are, Extortioner, Unjust, Adulterer, or even as this Publican.*"--- Here is some Appearance of Devotion, but it is only in Appearance.--- To thank God that we are not *Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers*, and as wicked in our Practices as other Men are, is certainly meet, right, and our bounden
L Duty:

Duty: For whatever Degrees of Goodness there may be in us, more than in others, it is owing to God's restraining, preventing and assisting Grace. — We are all equally conceived and born in Sin; all equally fallen short of the Glory of God, and liable to all the Curses and Maledictions of the Law; so that he that glorieth, must glory only in the Lord. — For none of us have any Thing which we did not receive; and whatever we have received, we did not in the least merit it, or could we lay the least Claim to it on any Account whatever: — We are wholly indebted to free Grace for all. — Had the *Pharisee* thought thus, when he said, "*God I thank thee that I am not as other Men are,*" it would have been an excellent Introduction to his Prayer: — But he was a Free-willer, as well as self-righteous (for he that is one, must be the other) and thought by his own Power and Strength he had kept himself from these Vices. — And yet I do not see what Reason he had to trust in himself that he was righteous, merely because he was not an *Extortioner*, *Unjust*, *Adulterer*; for all this while he might be, as he certainly was (as is also every self-righteous Person) as proud as the Devil. — But he not only boasts, but lies before God (as all Self-justiciaries will be found Liars here or hereafter.) He thanks God that he was not *Unjust*: — But is it not an Act of the highest Injustice to rob God of his Prerogative? Is it not an Act of Injustice to judge our Neighbour? And yet of both these Crimes this self-righteous Vaunter is guilty. — *Even as this Publican!* — He seems to speak with the utmost Disdain. — *This Publican!* Perhaps he pointed at the poor Man, that others might treat him with the

the like Contempt. — Thou proud, confident Boaster, what hadst thou to do with that *poor Publican*? Supposing other *Publicans* were *Unjust*, and *Extortioners*, did it therefore follow that he must be so? Or, if he had been such a Sinner, how knowest thou but he has repented of those Sins? His coming up to the Temple to pray, is one good Sign of a Reformation at least. — Thou art therefore inexcusable, O *Pharisee*, who thus judgest the *Publican*: — For thou that judgest him to be unjust, art, in the very Act of judging, *unjust thyself*; — Thy Sacrifice is only the Sacrifice of a Fool.

We have seen then what the *Pharisee's* negative Goodness comes to; I think, nothing at all. — Let us see how far his positive Goodness extends; — for, if we are truly religious, we shall not only eschew Evil, but also do Good: — “*I fast*, says he, *twice in the Week*, — *I give Tithes of all that I possess*.”

The *Pharisee* is not here condemned for his Fasting, for Fasting is a Christian Duty. — *When you fast*, says our Lord, thereby taking it for granted that his Disciples would fast. — And *when the Bridegroom shall be taken away, then shall they fast in those Days*. In Fasting often, says the Apostle. And all that would not be Cast-aways, will take Care, as their Privilege, without legal Constraint, to keep their Bodies under, and bring them into Subjection. — The *Pharisee* is only condemned for making a Righteousness of his Fasting, and thinking that God would accept him, or that he was any better than his Neighbours, merely on account of his Fasting: This is what he blamed for. The *Pharisee* was not to be discommended

for fasting twice in a Week ; --- I wish Christians would imitate him more in this : But to depend on Fasting in the least, for his Justification in the Sight of God, was really abominable. "*I give Tithes of all that I possess.*" He might as well have said, *I pay Tithes.* --- But Self-righteous People (whatever they may say to the contrary) think they *give* something to God. --- *I give Tithes of all that I possess:* --- I make Conscience of giving Tithes, not only of all that the Law requires, but of my *Mint, Annise, and Cummin*, of all Things whatsoever I possess. --- This was well. To pay Tithes when required by the Laws of the Land, is certainly our Duty ; --- But to boast of such Things, or of Fasting, is *Pharisaical* and Devilish. --- And now then let us sum up all the Righteousness of this boasting Pharisee, and see what little Reason he had to *trust in himself that he was righteous*, or to despise others. --- He is not *Unjust* (but we have only his bare Word for that, I think I have proved the contrary ;) he is no *Adulterer*, no *Extortioner* ; he fasts *twice in the Week*, and gives *Tithes of all that he possesses.* --- And all this he might do, and a great deal more, and yet be a Child of the Devil : For here is no Mention made of his loving the Lord his God with all his Heart, which was the *first and great Commandment of the Law* ; --- Here's not a single Syllable of inward Religion ; --- And he was not a true Jew, who was only one outwardly. And 'tis only an outside Piety at the best ; --- Inwardly he is full of Pride, Self-justification, Free-will and great Uncharitableness.

Were not the *Pharisees*, do you think, highly offended at this Character ? For they might easily know

know it was spoken against them. And tho' perhaps some of you may be offended at me, yet out of Love I must tell you, I fear this Parable is spoken against many of you: --- For are there not many of you, who go up to the Temple to pray, with no better Spirit than this *Pharisee* did? And because you fast, it may be in the *Lent*, or every *Friday*, and because you do no Body any Harm, receive the Sacrament, pay Tithes, give an Alms now and then; think that you are safe, and trust in yourselves that you are righteous, and inwardly despise those, who do not come up to you in these outward Duties? This I am perswaded is the Case of many of you, tho', alas! it is a desperate one, as I shall endeavour to shew at the Close of this Discourse.

Let us now take a View of the *Publican*, Ver. 13. *And the Publican standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his Eyes unto Heaven, but smote upon his Breast, saying, God be merciful to me a Sinner.*

The *Publican* standing afar off: --- Perhaps in the outward Court of the Temple, conscious to himself that he was not worthy to approach the Holy of Holies; --- so conscious and so weighed down with a Sense of his own Unworthiness, that he would not so much as lift up his Eyes unto Heaven, which he knew was God's Throne. --- Poor Heart! what did he feel at this Time! None but returning *Publicans*, like himself, can tell. --- Methinks I see him standing afar off, pensive, oppressed, and even overwhelmed with Sorrow. --- Sometimes he attempts to look up: --- But then, thinks he, the Heavens are unclean in God's Sight, and

and the very Angels are charged with Folly; how then shall such a Wretch as I dare to lift up my guilty Head! --- And to shew that his Heart was full of holy Self-resentment, and that he sorrowed after a godly Sort, he smote upon his Breast; the Word in the Original implies, that he *struck hard* upon his Breast: For he will lay the Blame upon none but his own wicked Heart. He will not, like unhumiliated *Adam*, tacitly lay the Fault of his Vileness upon God, and say, *The Passions which thou gavest me, they deceived me, and I sinned*: --- He is too penitent thus to reproach his Maker. --- He smites upon his Breast, his treacherous, ungrateful, desperately wicked Breast; --- a Breast now ready to burst: And at length, out of the Abundance of his Heart, I doubt not, with many Tears, he at last cries out, *God be merciful to me a Sinner*. --- Not, *God be merciful to yonder proud Pharisee*: --- He found enough in himself to vent his Resentment against, without looking abroad upon others. --- Not, *God be merciful to me a Saint*: --- For he knew all his *Righteousnesses were but filthy Rags*. --- Not, *God be merciful to such or such a one*; but, *God be merciful to me, even to me a Sinner*, --- a Sinner by Birth, --- a Sinner in Thought, Word, and Deed; --- a Sinner as to my Person, --- a Sinner as to all my Performances; --- a Sinner in whom is no Health, in whom dwelleth no good Thing; --- a Sinner poor, miserable, blind and naked, from the Crown of the Head to the Sole of the Feet, full of Wounds, and Bruises, and putrifying Sores; --- a self-accused, self-condemned Sinner. --- What think you? Would this *Publican* been offended if any Minister had told him that he deserved to be damned? Would he have been angry

angry, if any one had told him, that by Nature he was half a Devil and half a Beast? No: He would have confessed a Thousand Hells to have been his due, and that he was an earthly, beastly, devilish Sinner.--- He felt now what a dreadful Thing it was to depart from the living God:--- He felt that he was inexcusable every Way;--- that he could in nowise, upon Account of any Thing in himself, be justified in the Sight of God;--- And therefore lays himself at the Feet of sovereign Mercy, "*God be merciful to me a Sinner.*"--- Here's no Confidence in the Flesh, no Plea fetched from Fasting, paying Tithes, or the Performance of any other Duty;--- Here's no Boasting, that he was not an *Extortioner, Unjust, or an Adulterer.*--- Perhaps he had been guilty of all these Crimes, at least he knew he should have been guilty of all these, had he been left to follow the Devices and Desires of his own Heart; and therefore, with a broken and contrite Spirit, he cries out, "*God be merciful to me a Sinner.*"

This Man came up to the Temple to pray, and he prayed indeed.--- And a broken and contrite Heart God will not despise. *I tell you, says our Lord,*--- I who lay in the Bosom of the Father from all Eternity;--- I who am God, and therefore know all Things;--- I who can neither deceive, nor be deceived, whose Judgment is according to Right; but I tell you, whatever you may think of it, or think of me for telling you so, *this Man, this Publican, this despised, sinful, but broken-hearted Man, went down to his House justified* (acquitted, and looked upon as righteous in the Sight of God) *rather than the other.*

Let Pharisees take heed that they do not per-

vert this Text: — For when it is said, *I hit Myself went down to his House justified rather than the other*, — our Lord does not mean that both were justified, and that the *Publican* had rather more Justification than the *Pharisee*: — But it implies, either that the *Publican* was actually justified, but the *Pharisee* was not; or, that the *Publican* was in a better Way for Justification, or in a better Frame to receive it, than the *Pharisee*; — According to our Lord's Saying, — “*The Publicans and Harlots enter into the Kingdom of Heaven before you*.” — That the *Pharisee* was not justified is certain, — for God resisteth the Proud; and that the *Publican* was at this Time actually justified (and perhaps went home with a Sense of it in his Heart) we have great Reason to infer from the latter Part of the Text, — “*For every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*”

The Parable therefore now speaks to all that hear me, this Day: — For that our Lord intended it for our Learning is evident, from his making such a general Application; — For every one, says he, *that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*

The Parable of the *Publican* and *Pharisee* is but as it were a Glass wherein we may see the different Disposition of all Mankind; for all Mankind may be divided into two general Classes. — Either they trust wholly in themselves, or in part, that they are righteous, and then they are *Pharisees*; or they have no Confidence in the Flesh, are self-condemned Sinners, and then they come under the Character of the *Publican* just now discoursed of. And we may add also, that the different Reception of these

these Men met with, points out to us in lively Colours the different Treatment the Self-justiciary and self-condemned Criminal will meet with at the terrible Day of Judgment: *Every one that exalts himself shall be abased, but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*

Every one, without Exception, Young or Old, High or Low, Rich or Poor (for God is no Respector of Persons) *every one*, whosoever he be, that exalteth himself, and not Free Grace; every one that trusteth in himself that he is righteous, that rests in his Duties, or thinks to join them with the Righteousness of Jesus Christ for Justification in the Sight of God, tho' he be *no Adulterer, no Extortioner*, tho' he be not outwardly *Unjust*, nay, tho' he *fast twice in the Week*, and *gives Tithes of all that he possesses*; yet shall he be abased in the Sight of all good Men that know him here, and before Men and Angels, and God himself, when Jesus Christ comes to appear in Judgment hereafter. How low? None but the Almighty God can tell.— He shall be abased to live with Devils, and make his Abode in the lowest Hell for evermore.

Hear this, all ye Self-justiciaries, tremble and behold your Doom!---- A dreadful Doom, more dreadful than Words can express, or Thought conceive!— If you refuse to humble yourselves, after hearing this Parable, I call Heaven and Earth to witness against you this Day, that God shall visit you with all his Storms, and pour all the Vials of his Wrath upon your rebellious Heads.— You exalted yourselves here, and God shall abase you hereafter.— You are as proud as the Devil, and with Devils shall you dwell to all Eternity.— Be not deceived,— God is not mocked;— He sees
your

your Hearts, — he knows all Things. — And, notwithstanding you may come up to the Temple to pray, your Prayers are turned into Sin, and you go down to your Houses unjustified, if you are Self-justiciaries. And do you know what it is to be unjustified? Why, if you are unjustified, the Wrath of God abideth upon you; you are in your Blood. — All the Curses of the Law belong to you: Cursed are you when you go out, — cursed are you when you come in; — cursed are your Thoughts, cursed are your Words, cursed are your Deeds. — Every Thing you do, say, or think, from Morning to Night, is only one continued Series of Sin. However highly you may be esteemed in the Sight of Men, — however you may be honoured with the uppermost Seats in the Synagogues in the Church militant, you will have no Place in the Church triumphant. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty Hand of God: — Pull down every self-righteous Thought, and every proud Imagination, that now exalteth itself against the perfect, personal, impured Righteousness of the dear Lord Jesus: — For he, and he alone that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

He that humbleth himself, whatever he be. If, instead of Fasting twice in the Week, he has got drunk twice in the Week; — If, instead of giving Tithes of all that he possesses, has cheated the Minister of his Tithes, and King of his Taxes; notwithstanding he be *Unjust, Extortioner, Adulterer*, nay, notwithstanding the Sins of all Mankind be center'd and united in him; yet if thro' Grace, like the *Publican*, he is enabled to humble himself, he shall be exalted. — Not in a temporal Manner; — For Christians must rather expect to be abased, and

to have their Names cast out as Evil, and to lay down their Lives for Christ Jesus in this World : But he shall be exalted in a spiritual Sense ;— He shall be freely justified from all his Sins by the Blood of Jesus ;— He shall have Peace with God, a Peace which passeth all Understanding ;— Not only Peace, but Joy in Believing. — He shall be translated from the Kingdom of Satan, to the Kingdom of God's dear Son :— He shall dwell in Christ, and Christ in him : He shall be one with Christ, and Christ one with him : He shall drink of Divine Pleasures, as out of a River : He shall be sanctified throughout in Spirit, Soul, and Body. In one Word, he shall be filled with all the Fulness of God. — Thus shall the Man that humbleth himself be exalted here. — But oh, how high shall he be exalted hereafter ! As high as the highest Heavens, even to the Right-hand of God :— There he shall sit happy both in Soul and Body, and judge Angels ; high out of the Reach of all Sin and Trouble, eternally secure from all Danger of falling. — O Sinners, did you but know how highly God intends to exalt those who humble themselves, and believe in Jesus, surely you would humble yourselves, at least beg of God to humble you ;— for it is he that must strike the Rock of your Hearts, and cause Floods of contrite Tears to flow out therefrom. And oh that God would give this Sermon such a Commission as he once gave the Rod of Moses ! I would strike you through and through with the Rod of his Word, till each of you was brought to cry out with the poor *Publican*, *God be merciful to me a Sinner.* — What pleasant Language would this be in the Ears of the *Lord of Sabbath* ! Are there no poor Sinners among you ?
What

What, are you all *Pharisees*? Surely you cannot bear the Thoughts of returning home unjustified, can you? What if a Fit of the Apoplexy should seize you, and your Souls be hurried away before the awful Judge of Quick and Dead? What will you do without Christ's Righteousness? If you go out of the World unjustified, you must remain so for ever. Oh that you would humble yourselves! then would the Lord exalt you.--- It may be, that, whilst I am speaking, the Lord might justify you freely by his Grace.--- I observed, that perhaps the *Publican* had a Sense of his Justification before he went from the Temple, and knew that his Pardon was sealed in Heaven:--- And who knows but you may be thus exalted before you go home, if you humble yourselves? Oh what Peace, Love and Joy would you then feel in your Hearts! You would have a Heaven upon Earth.--- Oh that I could hear any of you say (as I once heard a poor Sinner under my Preaching cry out) *He is come, He is come!* How would you then, like him, extol a precious Christ, a free-hearted Christ! How would you magnify him for being such a Friend to *Publicans* and *Sinners*? Greater Love can no Man shew, than to lay down his Life for a Friend; But Christ laid down his Life for his Enemies,-- even for you, if you are enabled to humble yourselves, as the *Publican* did.--- Sinners, I know not how to leave off talking with you;--- I would fill my Mouth with Arguments,--- I would plead with you.--- *Come, let us reason together;*--- Tho' your Sins be as Scarlet, yet, if you humble yourselves, they shall be as white as Snow.--- One Act of true Faith in Christ justifies you for ever and ever. He has not promised you what he cannot perform; He

He is able to exalt you --- For God hath exalted, and given him a Name above every Name, that at the Name of Jesus every Knee shall bow. --- Nay, God hath exalted him to be not only a Prince, but a Saviour. --- May he be a Saviour to you! and then I shall have Reason to rejoice, in the Day of Judgment, that I have not preached in vain, and laboured in vain.



SERMON VIII.

The Holy Spirit convincing the World of Sin, Righteousness, and Judgment.

JOHN xvi. 8.

And when he is come, he will reprove the World of Sin, and of Righteousness, and of Judgment.

THESE Words contain Part of a gracious Promise which the blessed Jesus was pleased to make to his weeping and sorrowful Disciples. — The Time was now drawing near, in which the Son of Man was first to be lifted upon the Cross, and afterwards to Heaven. Kind, oh wondrous kind! had this merciful High Priest been to his Disciples during the Time of his tabernacling amongst them. — He had Compassion on their Infirmities, answered for them when assaulted by their Enemies, and set them right when out of

of the Way, either in Principle or Practice.—He neither called or used them as Servants, but Friends; and he revealed his Secrets to them from Time to Time.—He opened their Understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures; explained to them the hidden Mysteries of the Kingdom of God, when he spoke to others in Parables.—Nay, he became the Servant of them all, and even condescended to wash their Feet.—The Thoughts of parting with so dear and loving a Master as this, especially for a long Season, must needs affect them much.—When on a certain Occasion he intended to be absent from them only for a Night, we are told, he was obliged to *constrain* them to leave him.—No wonder then, that when he now informed them he must entirely go away, and that the *Pharisees* in his Absence should put them out of their Synagogues, and excommunicate them, yea, that the Time should come, that whosoever killed them should think they did God Service; (A Prophecy, one would imagine, in an especial Manner designed for the suffering Ministers of this Generation) No wonder, I say, considering all this, that we are told, *Ver. 6.* that Sorrow had filled their Hearts.—“*Because I have said these Things unto you,* says our Lord, *Sorrow hath filled your Hearts.*”—The Expression is very emphatical; their Hearts were so full of Concern, that they were ready to burst.—In order therefore to reconcile them to this mournful Dispensation, our dear and compassionate Redeemer shews them the Necessity he lay under to leave them;—“*Nevertheless,* says he, *I tell you the Truth; it is expedient for you that I go away.*” As tho’ he had said, Think not, my dear Disci-

SER. VIII. *the World of Sin, &c.* 139

ples, that I leave you out of Anger: — No, ^{but} for your Sakes, for your Profit, that I go away; ^{but} for if I go not away, if I die not upon the Cross, I for your Sins, and rise again for your Justification, and ascend into Heaven to make Intercession, and plead my Merits before my Father's Throne, the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, will not, cannot come unto you; but, if I depart, I'll send him unto you. — And, that they might know what he was to do, "*When he is come, says our Lord, he will reprove the World of Sin, and of Righteousness, and of Judgment.*"

The Person then referred to, in the Words of the Text, is plainly the Comforter, the Holy Ghost; and the Promise was first made to our Lord's Apostles, — But tho' it was primarily made to them, and was literally and remarkably fulfilled at the Day of *Pentecost*, when the Holy Ghost came down as a mighty rushing Wind, and also when Three thousand were pricked to the Heart by *Peter's* Preaching; yet, as the Apostles were the Representatives of the whole Body of Believers, we must infer, that this Promise must be looked upon as spoken to us, and to our Children, and to as many as the Lord our God shall call.

My Design from these Words, at present, is to shew the Manner in which the Holy Ghost generally works upon the Hearts of those who, thro' Grace, are made Vessels of Mercy, and translated from the Kingdom of Darkness into the Kingdom of God's dear Son.

I say, generally: — For, as God is a sovereign Agent, his sacred Spirit bloweth not only on whom, but when and how it listeth. Therefore, far be it from me to confine the Almighty to one Way

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Way of acting, or say, that all undergo an equal Degree of Conviction : — No, there is a holy Variety in God's Methods of calling home his Elect. But this we may affirm assuredly, "That, where-
" ever there is a Work of true Conviction and Con-
" version wrought upon a Sinner's Heart, the Ho-
" ly Ghost, whether by a greater or less Degree
" of inward Soul-trouble, does that which our
" Lord Jesus tells the Disciples, in the Words of
" the Text, that he should do when he came."

If any of you here ridicule inward Religion, or think there's no such Thing as our feeling or receiving the Holy Ghost, I fear my Preaching will be quite Foolishness to you, and that you will understand me no more than if I spoke to you in an unknown Tongue. — But as the Promise in the Text is made to the World, and as I know it will be fulfilling till Time shall be no more, I shall proceed to explain the general Way whereby the Holy Ghost works upon every converted Sinner's Heart ; and I hope that the Lord, even whilst I am speaking, may be pleased to fulfil it in many of your Hearts. — *And when he is come, he will reprove the World of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment.*

The Word, which we translate *reprove*, ought to be rendred *convince* ; and in the Original it implies a *Conviction* by Way of Argumentation, and coming with a Power upon the Mind equal to a Demonstration. — A great many Scoffers of these last Days will ask such as they term *Pretenders* to the Spirit, how they feel the Spirit, and how they know the Spirit ? They might as well ask, how they know, and how they feel the Sun when it shines upon the Body ? For with equal Power and

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Demonstration does the Spirit of God work upon and convince the Soul.

And, *First*, It convinces of Sin ; — And generally of some enormous Sin, the worst perhaps the convicted Person ever was guilty of. — Thus, when our Lord was conversing with the Woman of *Samaria*, he convinced her first of her Adultery ;
 “ *Woman*, says he, *go call thy Husband.* — *The Woman answered, and said, I have no Husband.*
 “ *Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no Husband : For thou hast had five Husbands,*
 “ *and he whom thou now hast, is not thy Husband : In this saidst thou truly.*” — With this there went such a powerful Conviction of all her other actual Sins, that soon after she *left her Water-pot, and went her Way into the City, and saith to the Men, Come, and see a Man that told me all Things that ever I did : Is not this the Christ ?*
 Thus our Lord also dealt with the Persecutor *Saul* : He convinced him first of the horrid Sin of Persecution ; — *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me ?*
 Such a Sense of all his other Sins, in all Probability, at the same Time revived in his Mind, that immediately he died ; that is, died to all his false Confidences, and was thrown into such an Agony of Soul, that he continued three Days, and neither did eat or drink. — This is the Method the Spirit of God generally takes in dealing with Sinners : — He first convinces them of some hainous actual Sin, and at the same Time brings all their other Sins into Remembrance, and as it were sets them in Battle-array before them : *When he is come, he will reprove the World of Sin.*

And was it ever thus with you, my dear Hearers ? (For I must question you as I go along, be-

cause I intend, by the Divine Help, to preach not only to your Heads, but your Hearts.) — Did the Spirit of God ever bring all your Sins thus to Remembrance, and make you cry out to God, *Thou writest bitter Things against me*? Did your actual Sins ever appear before you, as tho' drawn in a Map? If not, you have great Reason (unless you were sanctified from the Womb) to suspect that you are not convicted, much more not converted, and that the Promise of the Text was never yet fulfilled in your Hearts.

Further: When the Comforter comes into a Sinner's Heart, tho' it generally convinces the Sinner of his *actual* Sin first, yet it leads him to see and bewail his *original* Sin, the Fountain from which all these polluted Streams flow.

Tho' every Thing in Earth, Air, and Water, every Thing both without and within, concur to prove the Truth of that Assertion in the Scripture, *viz. That in Adam we all have died*; yet most are so hardened thro' the Deceitfulness of Sin, that notwithstanding they may give an Assent to the Truth of that Proposition in their Heads, yet they never felt it really in their Hearts.—Nay, some in Words professedly deny it, tho' their Works too, too plainly prove them to be degenerate Sons of a degenerate Father.—But when the Comforter, the Spirit of God, arrests a Sinner, and convinces him of Sin, all carnal Reasoning against original Corruption, every proud and high Imagination, which exalteth itself against that Doctrine, is immediately thrown down; and he is made to cry out, *Who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death*? He now finds that Concupiscence is Sin; and does not so much bewail his actual Sins, as the inward Per-

Perverseness of his Heart, which he now finds not only to be an Enemy to, but also direct Enmity against, God.

And did the Comforter, my dear Friends, ever come with such a convincing Power as this into your Hearts? Were you ever made to see and feel, that in your Flesh dwelleth no good Thing; — That you are conceived and born in Sin; — That you are by Nature Children of Wrath; — That God would be just if he damned you, tho' you never committed an actual Sin in your Lives? So often as you have been at Church and Sacrament, did you ever feelingly confess, that there was no Health in you; — That the Remembrance of your original and actual Sins was *grievous* unto you, and the Burden of them *intolerable*? If not, you have been only offering God vain Oblations; you never yet prayed in your Lives; the Comforter never yet came effectually into your Souls: — Consequently you are not in the Faith properly so called; — No, you are at present in a State of Death and Damnation.

Thirdly, The Comforter, when he comes effectually to work upon a Sinner, not only convinces him of the Sin of his Nature, the Sin of his Life, but also the Sin of his *Duties*.

We all naturally are Legalists, thinking to be justified by the Works of the Law. — When somewhat awakned by the Terrors of the Lord, we immediately, like the *Pharisees* of old, go about to establish our own Righteousness, and think we shall find Acceptance with God, if we seek it with Tears: — Finding ourselves damned by Nature and our actual Sins, we then think to recommend ourselves to God by our Duties, and hope, by our

Doings of one kind or another, to inherit eternal Life. — But, whenever the Comforter comes into the Heart, it convinces the Soul of these false Rests, and makes the Sinner to see that all his Righteousnesses are but as filthy Rags; and that his best Works are but so many splendid Sins; and that, for the most pompous Services, he deserves no better a Doom than that of the unprofitable Servant, *viz.* to be thrown into outer Darkness, where is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of Teeth.

And was this Degree of Conviction ever wrought in any of your Souls? Did the Comforter ever come into your Hearts, so as to make you sick of your Duties, as well as your Sins? — Were you ever, with the *great Apostle* of the *Gentiles*, made to abhor your own Righteousness which is by the Law, and acknowledge that you deserve to be damned, tho' you should give all your Goods to feed the Poor? Were you made to feel that your very Repentance needed to be repented of, and that every Thing in yourselves is but Dung and Dross? — and that all the Arguments you can fetch for Mercy, must be out of the Heart and pure unmerited Love of God? Were you ever made to ly at the Feet of sovereign Grace, and to say, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou may'st save me; if not, thou may'st justly damn me; — I have nothing to plead, I can in no wise justify myself in thy Sight; — My best Performances, I see, will condemn me; — and all I have to depend upon is thy free Grace?" — What say you? Was this ever, or is this now, the habitual Language of your Hearts? You have been frequently at the Temple; — But did you ever approach

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proach it in the Temper of the poor *Publican*, and, after you have done all, acknowledge that you have done nothing; --- and, upon a feeling experimental Sense of your own Unworthiness and Sinfulness every way, smite upon your Breasts, and say, "*God be merciful to us Sinners!*" If you never were thus minded, the Comforter never yet effectually came into your Souls, --- you are out of Christ; and, if God should require your Souls in that Condition, he would be no better to you than a consuming Fire.

But there is a *fourth Sin*, which the Comforter, when he comes, convinces the Soul of, and which alone (it is very remarkable) our Lord mentions, as tho' it was the only Sin worth mentioning; --- for indeed it is the Root of all other Sins whatsoever: --- It is the reigning as well as damning Sin of the World.--- And what now do you imagine that Sin may be? --- It is that cursed Sin, that Root of all other Evils, I mean the Sin of *Unbelief*.--- *Of Sin*, says our Lord, *Ver. 9. because they believe not on me.*

But does the Christian World, and consequently any of you that hear me this Day, want the Holy Ghost to convince you of Unbelief? Are there any Infidels here? Yes, (Oh that I had not too great Reason to think so!) I fear most are such: --- Not indeed such Infidels as professedly deny the Lord that bought us (tho' I fear too many even of such Monsters are in every Country;) but I mean such Unbelievers, that have no more Faith in Christ than the Devils themselves. --- Perhaps you may think you believe, because you repeat the Creed, or subscribe to a Confession of Faith; --- because you go to Church or Meeting, receive the

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Sacrament, and are taken into full Communion. — These are blessed Privileges; but all this may be done, without our being true Believers. — And I know not how to detect your false hypocritical Faith better, than by putting to you this Question: — Suppose I was to ask you, “How long have you believed?” — Would not most of you say, “As long as we can remember, we we never did disbelieve?” — Then this is a certain Sign that you have no true Faith at all; — No, not so much as a Grain of Mustard-seed: — For, if you believe now, (unless you were sanctified from your Infancy) you must know that there was a Time in which you did not believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; — and the Holy Ghost, if ever you received it, convinced you of this: — Eternal Truth has declared, *When he is come, he will convince the World of Sin, because they believe not on me.*

None of us believe by Nature! — But after the Holy Ghost has convinced us of the Sin of our Natures, and the Sin of our Lives and Duties, in order to convince us of our utter Inability to save ourselves, and that we must be beholden to God, as for every Thing else, so for Faith (without which it is impossible to please or be saved by Christ) he convinces us also, that we have no Faith. — Dost thou believe on the Son of God? is the grand Question which the Holy Ghost now puts to the Soul: — At the same Time he works with such Power and Demonstration, that the Soul sees, and is obliged to confess, that it has no Faith.

This is a Thing little thought of by most that call themselves Believers. They dream they are Christians, because they live in a Christian Country:

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try: — If they were born *Turks*, they would believe on *Mahomet*; — For what is that which Men commonly call Faith, but an outward Consent to the established Religion? But do not you thus deceive your own selves; — For true Faith is quite another Thing. — Ask yourselves therefore, Whether or not the Holy Ghost ever powerfully convinced you of the Sin of Unbelief? You are perhaps so devout (as you may imagine) as to get a Catalogue of Sins, which you look over, and confess in a formal Manner, as often as you go to the Holy Sacrament: --- But, amongst all your Sins, did you ever once confess and bewail that damning Sin of *Unbelief*? --- Were you ever made to cry out, “Lord, give me Faith; --- Lord, give me to believe on thee; --- Oh that I had Faith! --- Oh that I could believe!” If you never were thus distressed, --- at least, if you never saw and felt that you had no Faith, it is a certain Sign that the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, never came into and worked savingly upon your Souls. But is it not odd, that the Holy Ghost should be called a Comforter, when it is plain, by the Experience of all God’s Children, that this Work of Conviction is usually attended with sore inward Conflicts, and a great deal of Soul-trouble? --- I answer, The Holy Ghost may well be termed a Comforter, even in this Work; --- Because it is the only Way to, and ends in, true solid Comfort. --- Blessed are they that are thus convicted by him, for they shall be comforted. --- Nay, not only so, but there is present Comfort, even in the midst of these Convictions: --- The Soul secretly rejoices in the Sight of its own Misery, --- blesses God for bringing it out of Darkness into Light, and looks

forward with a comfortable Prospect of future Deliverances, knowing, that, tho' Sorrow may endure for a Night, Joy will come in the Morning.

Thus it is that the Holy Ghost convinces the Soul of Sin. — And, if so, how wretchedly are they mistaken, that blend the Light of the Spirit with the Light of Conscience, as all such do, who say, "That Christ lighteth every Man that cometh into the World, and that Light, if improved, will bring us to Jesus Christ?" — If such Doctrine be true, the Promise in the Text was needless: — Our Lord's Apostles had already that Light, — the World hereafter to be convinced had that Light; — And, if that was sufficient to bring them to Christ, why was it expedient that Christ should go away to Heaven, to send down the Holy Ghost to do this for them? — Alas! all have not this Spirit: — It is the special Gift of God, and, without this special Gift, we can never come to Christ.

The Light of Conscience will accuse or convince us of any common Sin; — But the Light of natural Conscience never did, never will, and never can, convince of Unbelief. — If it could, how comes it to pass, that not one of the Heathens, who improved the Light of Nature in such an eminent Degree, was ever convinced of Unbelief? No, natural Conscience cannot effect this; — It is the peculiar Property of the Holy Ghost the Comforter: — *When he is come, he will reprove (or convince) the World of Sin, of Righteousness, and Judgment.*

We have heard how he convinces of Sin: — We come now to shew what is the *Righteousness* which the Comforter convinces the World of.

By the Word *Righteousness*, in some Places of Scripture, we are to understand that common Justice which we ought to practise between Man and Man;— as when *Paul* is said to reason of *Temperance* and *Righteousness* before a trembling *Felix*.— But here (as in a Multitude of other Places in holy Writ) we are to understand by the Word *Righteousness*, the active and passive Obedience of the dear Lord Jesus;— even that perfect, personal, all-sufficient Righteousness, which he has wrought out for that World which the Spirit is to convince.— Of *Righteousness*, says our Lord, *because I go to the Father, and ye see me no more*.— This is one Argument that the Holy Spirit makes use of to prove Christ's Righteousness,— Because he is gone to the Father, and we see him do more.— For, had he not wrought out a sufficient Righteousness, the Father would have sent him back, as not having done what he undertook; and we should have seen him again.

Oh the Righteousness of Christ! It so comforts my Soul, that I must be excused if I mention it in all my Discourses.— I would not, if I could help it, have one Sermon without it.— Whatever Infidels may object, or *Arminians* sophistically argue, against an *imputed Righteousness*;— yet whoever know themselves and God, must acknowledge, that Jesus Christ is the End of the Law for Righteousness, and perfect Justification in the Sight of God, to every one that believeth; and that we are to be made the Righteousness of God in him.— This, and this only, a poor Sinner can lay hold of, as a sure Anchor of his Hope.— Whatever other Scheme of Salvation Men may lay, I acknowledge

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I can see no other Foundation whereon to build my Hopes of Salvation, but on the Rock of Christ's personal Righteousness imputed to my Soul.

Many, I believe, have a rational Conviction of and agree with me in this :--- But rational Convictions, if rested in, avail but little ;--- it must be a spiritual, experimental Conviction of the Truth which is saving.--- And therefore our Lord says,--- When the Holy Ghost comes in the Day of his Power, it convinces of this Righteousness, viz. of the Reality, and Compleatness, and Sufficiency of it, to save a poor Sinner.

In the foregoing Part of this Discourse, we shewed how the Holy Ghost convinces the Sinner of the Sin of his Nature, Life, Duties, and of the Sin of Unbelief.--- And what then must the poor Creature do ? He must, he must inevitably despair, if there be no Hope but in himself.--- When therefore the Spirit has hunted the Sinner out of all his false Rests and Hiding-places, taken off the pitiful Fig-leaves of his own Works, and driven him out of the Trees of the Garden (his outward Reformations) and placed him naked before the Bar of a Sovereign, Holy, Just, and Sin-avenging God ; then, then it is, when the Soul, having the Sentence of Death within itself because of Unbelief, has a sweet Display of Christ's Righteousness made to it by the Holy Spirit of God.--- Here it is that he begins more immediately to act in the Quality of a Comforter, and convinces the Soul so powerfully of the Reality and All-sufficiency of Christ's Righteousness, that the Soul is immediately set a hungry and thirsting after it.--- Now the Sinner begins to see, that tho' he has destroyed himself, yet in Christ is his Help ;---
That

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That, tho' he has no Righteousness of his own to recommend him, there is a Fulness of Grace, a Fulness of Truth, a Fulness of Righteousness in the dear Lord Jesus, which, if once imputed to him, would make him happy for ever and ever.

None, none can tell, but those happy Souls who have experienced it, with what Demonstration of the Spirit this Conviction comes. --- Oh how amiable, as well as all-sufficient, does the Blessed Jesus now appear! With what new Eyes does the Soul now see the Lord its Righteousness! Brethren, it is unutterable. --- If you were never thus convinced of Christ's Righteousness in your own Souls, tho' you may believe it doctrinally, it will avail you nothing, --- the Comforter never came savingly into your Souls; --- and then you are comfortless indeed.

But what will this Righteousness avail, if the Soul has it not in Possession? --- The next Thing therefore the Comforter, when he comes, convinces the Soul of, is *Judgment*.

By the Word *Judgment*, I understand that well-grounded Peace, that settled Judgment, which the Soul forms of itself, when it is enabled by the Spirit of God to lay hold on Christ's Righteousness, which I believe it always does, when convinced in the Manner before-mentioned. --- "Of *Judgment*, says our Lord, *because the Prince of this World is judged*;" that is, The Soul, being enabled to lay hold on Christ's perfect Righteousness by a lively Faith, has a Conviction wrought in it by the Holy Spirit, that the *Prince of this World is judged*. --- The Soul being now justified by Faith, it has Peace with God thro' our Lord Jesus Christ

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Christ, and can triumphantly say, "It is Christ
 " that justifies me, who is he now that condemns
 " me? The strong Man armed is now cast out;---
 " My Soul is now in a true Peace;--- The *Prince*
 " of *this World* will come and accuse, but he has
 " now no Share in me:--- The blessed Spirit which
 " I have received, and whereby I am enabled to
 " apply Christ's Righteousness to my poor Soul,
 " powerfully convinces me of this;--- Why should
 " I fear? or of what shall I be afraid, since God's
 " Spirit witnesses with my Spirit, that I am a
 " Child of God? The Lord is ascended up on
 " High;--- He has led Captivity captive;--- He
 " has received the Holy Ghost the Comforter, that
 " best of Gifts for Men; and that Comforter is
 " come into my Heart:--- He is faithful that hath
 " promised:--- I, even I, am powerfully, ratio-
 " nally, spiritually convicted of *Sin, Righteous-*
 " *ness and Judgment.*--- By this I know the *Prince*
 " of *this World* is judged."

Thus, I say, may we suppose the Soul to tri-
 umph, in which the Promise of the Text is hap-
 pily fulfilled.—And tho', at the Beginning of this
 Discourse, I said most had never experienced any
 Thing of this, and that therefore this Preaching
 must be Foolishness to most; yet I doubt not but
 there are some few happy Souls, who, thro' Grace,
 have been enabled to follow me Step by Step;---
 And notwithstanding the Holy Ghost might not
 directly work in the same Order as I have describ-
 ed, and perhaps they cannot exactly say the Time
 when, yet they have a well-grounded Confidence
 that the Work is done, and that they have really
 been convinced of *Sin, Righteousness and Judge-*
ment, in some Way, or at some Time or another.

And

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And now, what shall I say to you? O thank God, thank the Lord Jesus, thank the ever-blessed Trinity, for this unspeakable Gift:— For you would never have been thus highly favoured, had not he, who first spoke Darkness into Light, loved you with an everlasting Love, and enlightened you by his Holy Spirit, and that too, not on account of any good Thing foreseen in you, but for his own Name's Sake.

Be humble therefore, O Believers, be humble: Look to the Rock from whence you have been hewn;— Extol *free Grace*;— Admire *electing Love*, which alone has made you to differ from the rest of your Brethren.—Has God brought you into Light? Walk as becometh Children of Light. Provoke not the Holy Spirit to depart from you: For tho' he hath sealed you to the Day of Redemption, and you know that the *Prince of this World is judged*; yet if you backslide, grow lukewarm, or forget your first Love, the Lord will visit your Offences with the Rod of Affliction, and your Sin with spiritual Scourges.— Be not therefore high-minded, but fear.— Rejoice, but let it be with Trembling.— As the Elect of God, put on, not only Humbleness of Mind, but Bowels of Compassion; and pray, oh pray, for your unconverted Brethren!— Help me, help me now, O Children of God, and hold up my Hands, as *Aaron and Hur* once held up the Hands of *Moses*.— Pray, whilst I am preaching, that the Lord may enable me to say, "This Day is the Promise in the Text fulfilled in some poor Sinners Hearts."— Cry mightily to God, and, with the Cords of a holy Violence, pull down Blessings on your Neighbours Heads.— Christ yet lives and reigns

reigns in Heaven; the Residue of the Spirit is yet in his Hand, and a plentiful Effusion of it is promised in the latter Days of the Church:--- And oh that the Holy Ghost, the blessed Comforter, would now come down, and convince those that are Christless amongst you, of *Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment!* Oh that you were once made willing to be convinced!--- But perhaps you had rather be filled with Wine than with the Spirit, and are daily chasing that Holy Guest from your Souls.--- What shall I say for you to God? "*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*" What shall I say from God to you? Why? That God was in Christ reconciling the World unto himself:--- Therefore I beseech you, as in Christ's Stead, be ye reconciled to God.--- Do not go away contradicting and blaspheming.--- I know *Satan* would have you begone.--- Many of you may be uneasy, and are ready to cry out, *What a Weariness is this!* But I will not let you go;--- I have wrestled with God for my Hearers in private, and I must wrestle with you here in public.--- Tho' of myself I can do nothing, and you can no more by your own Power come to and believe on Christ, than *Lazarus* could come forth from the Grave; yet who knows but God may beget some of you again to a lively Hope by this Foolishness of Preaching, and that you may be some of that World which the Comforter is to convince of *Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment?*--- Poor, Christless Souls! do you know what a Condition you are in? Why, you are lying in the wicked One, the Devil; he is in you, he rules in you, he walks and dwells in you, unless you dwell in Christ, and the Comforter is come into

into your Hearts.---And will you contentedly ly in that wicked One the Devil? What Wages will he give you? Eternal Death.---Oh that you would come to Christ!---The free Gift of God thro' him is eternal Life.---He will accept of you even now, if you will believe in him.---The Comforter may yet come into your Hearts, even yours.---All that are now his living Temples, were once lying in the wicked One, as well as you.---This blessed Gift, this Holy Ghost, the blessed Jesus received even for the Rebellious:---Oh that he would shew me, that he has received it for some of you!---I see many of you affected:---But are your Passions only a little wrought upon, or are your Souls really touched with a lively Sense of the Hainousness of your Sins, your Want of Faith, or the Preciousness of the Righteousness of Jesus Christ? If so, I hope the Lord has been gracious, and the Comforter is coming into your Hearts.---Oh do not stifle these Convictions!---Do not go away, and straightway forget what Manner of Doctrine you have heard, and thereby shew that these are only common Workings of a few transient Convictions, floating upon the Surface of your Hearts---Beg of God that you may be sincere (for he alone can make you so) and that you may indeed desire that the Promise of the Text may be fulfilled in your Souls.---Who knows but the Lord may be gracious? Remember you have no Plea but sovereign Mercy; but, for your Encouragement also, remember it is the World, such as you are, to whom the Comforter is to come, and whom he is to convince:---Wait therefore at Wisdom's Gates.---The bare Probability of having a Door of Mercy opened, is enough to keep you striving.---Christ
Jesus

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Jesus came into the World to save Sinners, the Chief of them: — You know not but he came to save you. — Do not go and quarrel with God's Decrees, and say, If I am a Reprobate, I shall be damned; if I am elected, I shall be saved; and therefore I'll do nothing. — What have you to do with God's Decrees? Secret Things belong to him; it is your Business to add all Diligence to make your Calling and Election sure. — If there are but few that find the Way that leads to Life, do you strive to be some of them: — You know not but you may be in the Number of those few, and that your striving may be the Means which God intends to bless, to give you an Entrance in. — If you do not act thus, you are unsincere; and, if you do, who knows but you may find Mercy? For tho', after you have done all that you can, God may justly cut you off, yet never was a single Person damned that did all that he could. — Tho' therefore your Hands are withered, stretch them out; tho' you are impotent, sick, and lame, come ly at the Pool. — Who knows but by and by the Lord Jesus may have Compassion on you, and send the Comforter to convince you of *Sin, Righteousness*, and of *Judgment*? He is a God full of Compassion and Long-suffering, otherwise you and I had been long since lifting up our Eyes in Torments. — But still he is patient with us: — Yet, O Christless Sinners, you are alive, and who knows but God intends to bring you to Repentance? Could my Prayers or Tears effect it, you should have Volumes of the one, and Floods of the other. — My Heart is now touched with a Sense of your Condition: — May our merciful High Priest now send down the Comforter, and make you sensible of

of it also!—Oh the Love of Christ! It constrains me yet to beseech you to come to him.—Oh what do you reject, if you reject Christ, the *Lord of Glory*!—Oh Sinners, give the dear Redeemer a Lodging in your Souls.—Do not be *Bethslemites*. Sons and Daughters, give Christ your Hearts, your whole Hearts.—Indeed he is worthy.—He made you, and not you yourselves.—You are not your own.—Oh give Christ then your Bodies and Souls, which are his!—Is it not enough to melt you down, to think that the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth Eternity, should thus condescend to invite you by his Minister? How soon can he frown you to Hell? and how know you, but he may this very Instant, if you do not hear his Voice?—Did any yet harden their Hearts against Christ, and prosper? Come then, do not send me sorrowful away: Do not let me have Reason to cry out, “O my Leanness, my Leanness!”—Do not let me go weeping into my Closer, and say, “Lord, they will not believe my Report;—Lord, I have called them, and they will not answer; I am unto them as a very pleasant Song, and as one that plays upon a pleasant Instrument; but their Hearts are running after the Lust of the Eye, the Lust of the Flesh, and the Pride of Life.”—Would you be willing that I should give such an Account of you, or make such a Prayer before God? And yet I must not only do so here, but appear in Judgment against you hereafter, unless you will come to Christ.—Once more therefore I intreat you to come.—What Objections have you to make?—Behold, I stand here in the Name of God, to answer all that you can offer.—But I know no one can come, unless the Father

draw him: — I will therefore address me to my God, and intercede with him to send the Comforter into your Hearts.

“ O blessed Jesus, who art a God whose Compassions fail not, and in whom all the Promises are *Yea* and *Amen*; thou that fittest between the Cherubims, shew thyself amongst us. — Oh let us now see thy Outgoings! — Oh let us now taste that thou art gracious, and reveal thy Almighty Arm! — Get thyself the Victory in these poor Sinners Hearts. — Let not the Word spoken prove like Water spilt upon the Ground. — Send down, send down, O great High Priest, the Holy Spirit, to convince the World of *Sin*, of *Righteousness*, and of *Judgment*. — So will we give Thanks and Praise to thee for ever; — Even to thee O Father, thee O Son, and thee O blessed Spirit; to whom, as three Persons, but one God, be ascribed by Angels and Archangels, by Cherubims and Seraphims, and all the heavenly Host, all possible Power, Might, Majesty, and Dominion, now and for evermore. *Amen, Amen, Amen.*”

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SER.

SERMON IX.

The Conversion of ZACCHEUS.



LUKE XIX. 9, 10.

And Jesus said unto him, This Day is Salvation come to this House; forasmuch as he also is the Son of Abraham. For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

SALVATION, everywhere through the whole Scripture, is said to be the free Gift of God, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. Not only free, because God is a sovereign Agent, and therefore may withhold it from, or confer it on, whom he pleaseth; but free, because there is nothing to be found in Man, that can anyway induce God to be merciful unto him. — The Righteousness of Jesus Christ is the sole Cause of our finding Favour in God's Sight: — This Righteousness apprehended by Faith (which is also the Gift of God) makes it our own; — And this Faith, if true, will work by Love.

These are Parts of those glad Tidings which are published in the Gospel; and of the Certainty of them, next to the express Word of God, the Experience of all such as have been saved, is the best, and, as I take it, the most undoubted Proof. — That God might teach us every way, he has been

pleased to leave upon Record many Instances of the Power of his Grace exerted in the Salvation of several particular Persons, that we, hearing how he dealt with them, might from thence infer the Manner we must expect to be dealt with ourselves, and learn in what Way we must look for Salvation, if we truly desire to be made Partakers of the heavenly Inheritance with the Saints in Light.

The Conversion of the Person referred to in the Text, I think, will be of no small Service to us in this Matter, if rightly improved. — I would hope, most of you know who the Person is, to whom the Lord Jesus speaks; — It is the Publican *Zaccheus*, to whose House the blessed Jesus said Salvation came, and whom he pronounces a Son of *Abraham*.

It is my Design (God helping) to make some Remarks upon his Conversion recorded at large in the Verses foregoing, and then to inforce the latter Part of the Text, as an Encouragement to poor undone Sinners to come to Jesus Christ. — *For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*

The Evangelist *Luke* introduces the Account of this Man's Conversion thus, Ver. 1. "*And Jesus entred and passed through Jericho.*" — The holy Jesus made it his Business to go about doing Good. As the Sun in the Firmament is continually spreading his benign, quickning, and cheering Influences over the natural; so the Sun of Righteousness arose with Healing under his Wings, and was daily and hourly diffusing his gracious Influences over the moral World. — The Chapter foregoing acquaints us of a notable Miracle wrought by the holy Jesus on a poor blind *Bartimeus*; — And in
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this a greater presents itself to our Consideration. — The Evangelist would have us take particular Notice of it; for he introduces it with the Word *Behold*: — “*And behold, says he, Ver. 2. there was a Man named Zaccheus, which was the Chief among the Publicans, and he was rich.*”

Well might the Evangelist usher in the Relation of this Man's Conversion with the Word *Behold*! For, according to human Judgment, how many unsurmountable Obstacles lay in the Way of it! Surely no one will say there was any Fitness in *Zaccheus* for Salvation; for we are told that he was a *Publican*, and therefore in all Probability a notorious Sinner. — The *Publicans* were Gatherers of the *Roman Taxes*; — They were infamous for their abominable Extortion; — Their very Name therefore became so very odious, that we find the *Pharisees* often reproached our Lord, as very wicked, because he was a Friend unto and sat down to Meat with them. — *Zaccheus* then, being a *Publican*, was no doubt a Sinner; and, being Chief among the *Publicans*, consequently was Chief among Sinners. — Nay, *he was rich*. And one inspired Apostle has told us, that not *many mighty*, not *many noble*, are called. — Another saith, *God has chosen the Poor of this World, rich in Faith*. — And he that was the Maker and the Redeemer of the Apostles assures us, *that it is easier for a Camel, or Cable-rope, to go through the Eye of a Needle, than a rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of God*. — Let not therefore the Rich glory in the Multitude of their Riches.

But rich as he was, we are told, *Ver. 3. that he sought to see Jesus*. — And that was a Wonder indeed! — The common People heard our

Lord gladly, and the Poor received the Gospel.— The Multitude, the *οχλος*, the Mob, the People that knew not the Law, as the proud High Priests called them, used to follow him on Foot out into the Country, and sometimes staid with him three Days together to hear him preach : — But did the Rich believe or attend on him ? No. — Our Lord preached up the Doctrine of the Cross ; — He preached too searching for them, and therefore they counted him their Enemy, persecuted and spoke all Manner of Evil against him falsely. Let not the Ministers of Christ marvel, if they meet with the like Treatment from the rich Men of this wicked and adulterous Generation. — I should think it no Scandal (supposing it true) to hear it affirmed, that none but the Poor attended my Ministry. — Their Souls are as precious to our Lord Jesus Christ, as the Souls of the greatest Men. — They were the Poor that attended him in the Days of his Flesh : — These are they whom he hath chosen to be rich in Faith, and to be the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven. — Were the Rich in this World's Goods generally to speak well of me, wo be unto me ; — I should think it a dreadful Sign that I was only a Wolf in Sheep's Clothing, that I spoke *Peace, Peace*, when there was *no Peace*, and prophesied smother Things than the Gospel would allow of. Hear ye this, O ye Rich. — Let who will dare to do it, God forbid that I should despise the Poor ; in doing so, I should reproach my Maker. — No, the Poor are dear to my Soul ; — I rejoyce to see them fly to the Doctrine of Christ, like the Doves to your Windows. — I only pray that the Poor, who attend, may be evangelized, and turned into the Spirit

Spirit of the Gospel: — If so, *Blessed are ye; — for yours is the Kingdom of Heaven.*

But we must return to *Zaccheus*. — “*He sought to see Jesus.*” That is good News. — I could heartily wish I could say, it was out of a good Principle: — But, without speaking contrary to that Charity which hopes and believeth all Things for the best, we may say, that the same Principle drew him after Christ, which now draws Multitudes (to speak plainly, it may be Multitudes of you) to hear a particular Preacher, that is, *Curiosity*: — For we are told, that he came not to hear his Doctrine, but to view his Person, or, to use the Words of the Evangelist, to see *who he was*. — Our Lord’s Fame was now spread abroad through all *Jerusalem*, and all the Country round about: — Some said he was a good Man; — others, Nay, but he deceiveth the People. — And therefore *Curiosity* drew out this rich Publican *Zaccheus* to see who this Person was, of whom he had heard such various Accounts. — But it seems he could not conveniently get a Sight of him for the *Press*, and because he was *little of Stature*. Alas! how many are kept from seeing Christ in Glory, by reason of the *Press*! — I mean, How many are ashamed of being singularly good, and therefore follow a Multitude to do Evil, because they have a *Press* or Throng of polite Acquaintance! — And, for fear of being set at nought by those with whom they used to sit at Meat, they deny the Lord of Glory, and are ashamed to confess him before Men. — This base, this servile Fear of Man, is the Bane of true Christianity; — it brings a dreadful Snare upon the Soul, and is the Ruin of Ten thousands: — For I am fully persuaded

swaded, Numbers are rationally convicted of Gospel-truths; but, not being able to bruike Contempt, they will not prosecute their Convictions, nor reduce them into Practice.— Happy those, who in this Respect, at least like *Zaccheus*, are resolved to overcome all Impediments that ly in their Way to a Sight of Christ: — For, finding he could not see Christ because of the Press and the Littleness of his natural Stature, he did not smite upon his Breast, and depart, saying, “It is in vain to seek after a Sight of him any longer, I can never attain unto it.” — No, finding he could not see Christ, if he continued in the midst of, *he* (Ver. 4.) *ran before, the Multitude, and climbed up into a Sycamore-tree, to see him; for he was to pass that Way.*

There’s no seeing Christ in Glory, unless we run before the Multitude, and are willing to be in the Number of those despised Few, who take the Kingdom of God by Violence.— That broad Way, in which so many go, can never be that strait and narrow Way which leads to Life.— Our Lord’s Flock was, and always will be, comparatively a little one: — And unless we dare to run before the Multitude in a holy Singularity, and can rejoice in being accounted Fools for Christ’s Sake, we shall never see Jesus with Comfort, when he appears in Glory.— From mentioning the Sycamore-tree, and considering the Difficulty with which *Zaccheus* must climb it, we may further learn, that those who would see Christ, must undergo other Difficulties and Hardships besides Contempt. *Zaccheus*, without doubt, went through both.— Did not many, think you, laugh at him as he ran along, and in the Language of *Michal, Saul’s Daughter*,

Daughter, cry out, How glorious did the rich Zaccheus look To-day, when, forgetting the Greatness of his Station, he ran before a pitiful, giddy Mob, and climbed up a Sycamore-tree, to see an *Enthusiastick* Preacher! — But Zaccheus cares not for all that; — his Curiosity was strong: — If he could but see who Jesus was, he did not value what Scoffers said of him. — And thus much more will it be with all those who have an effectual Desire to see Jesus in Heaven: — They will go on from Strength to Strength, break through every Difficulty lying in their Way, and care not what Men or Devils say of or do unto them. — *May the Lord make us all thus minded, for his dear Son's Sake!*

At length, after taking much Pains, and going (as we may well suppose) through much Contempt, Zaccheus has climbed the Tree; and there he sits, as he thinks, hid in the Leaves of it, and watching when he should see Jesus pass by: — “*For he was to pass by that Way.*”

But sing, O Heavens, and rejoice, O Earth! Praise, magnify, and adore sovereign, electing, free, preventing Love; Jesus the everlasting God, the Prince of Peace, who saw Nathanael under the Fig-tree, and Zaccheus from Eternity, now sees him in the Sycamore-tree, and calls him in Time. *Ver. 5. “And when Jesus came to the Place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zaccheus, make haste and come down; for this Day I must abide at thy House.”* — Amazing Love! Well might Luke usher in the Account with the Word *Behold!* It is worthy our highest Admiration. When Zaccheus thought of no such Thing, nay, thought that Christ Jesus did not know

know him; Behold, Christ does what we never hear he did before or after, I mean, invite himself to the House of Zaccheus, — saying, *Zaccheus, make haste and come down; for this Day I must abide at thy House.* — Not pray let me abide, but I must abide this Day at thy House. He also calls him by Name, as tho' he was well acquainted with him: — And indeed well he might; for his Name was written in the Book of Life, he was one of those whom the Father had given him from all Eternity: Therefore he must abide at his House that Day. — For whom he did predestinate, them he also called.

Here then, as through a Glass, we may see the Doctrine of Free Grace evidently exemplified before us. — Here was no Fitness in Zaccheus. — He was a *Publican*, chief among the *Publicans*; not only so, but rich, and came hither to see Christ only out of *Curiosity*: But sovereign Grace triumphs over all. — And if we do God Justice, and are effectually wrought upon, we must acknowledge there was no more Fitness in us than in Zaccheus; — And, had not Christ prevented us by his Call, we had remained dead in Trespasses and Sins, and alienated from the Divine Life, even as others. “*Jesus looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zaccheus, make haste and come down; for this Day I must abide at thy House.*”

With what different Emotions of Heart may we suppose Zaccheus received this Invitation? Think you not that he was surprised to hear Jesus Christ call him by Name, and not only so, but invite himself to his House? Surely, thinks Zaccheus, I dream: It cannot be; — How should he know me? I never saw him before: — Besides, I shall under-
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so much Contempt, if I receive him under my Roof. — Thus, I say, we may suppose *Zaccheus* thought within himself. But what saith the Scripture? *I will make a willing People in the Day of my Power.* — With this outward Call, there went an efficacious Power from God, which sweetly overruled his natural Will; and therefore, *Ver. 6. "He made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully;"* — Not only into his House, but also into his Heart.

Thus it is the great God brings home his Children. He calls them by Name, by his Word or Providence; — He speaks to them by his Spirit. — Hereby they are enabled to open their Hearts, and are made willing to receive the King of Glory in. — For *Zaccheus's* sake, let us not entirely condemn People that come under the Word, out of no better Principle than *Curiosity*. Who knows but God may call them? It is good to be where the Lord is passing by. — *May all that are now present out of this Principle, hear the Voice of the Son of God speaking to their Souls, and so hear that they may live!* Not that Men ought therefore to take Encouragement to come out of *Curiosity*. — For perhaps a Thousand more, at other Times, came to see Christ out of *Curiosity*, as well as *Zaccheus*, which were not effectually called by his Grace. — I only mention this for the Encouragement of my own Soul, and the Consolation of God's Children, who are too apt to be angry with those who do not attend on the Word out of Love to God: — But let them alone. — Brethren pray for them. — How do you know but Jesus Christ may speak to their Hearts? A few Words from Christ, applied by his Spirit, will save their Souls. — *Zaccheus*, says Christ,
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make haste and come down.— And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully, and I have observed, in Holy Scripture, how particularly it is remarked, that Persons rejoiced upon believing in Christ.— Thus the converted Eunuch went on his Way rejoicing ; — thus the Jaylor rejoiced with his whole House ; — thus Zaccheus received Christ joyfully.— And well may those rejoice that receive Jesus Christ ; for with him they receive Righteousness, Sanctification, and eternal Redemption.— Many have brought up an ill Report upon our good Land, and would fain persuade People that Religion will make them melancholy mad.— So far from it, that Joy is one Ingredient of the Kingdom of God in the Heart of a Believer ; — *The Kingdom of God is Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost.*— To rejoice in the Lord, is a Gospel-duty. *Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, Rejoice.*— And who can be so joyful as those who know that their Pardon is sealed before they go hence and are no more seen ? The Godly may, but I cannot see how any ungodly Men can, rejoice : — They cannot be truly cheerful. What if wicked Men may sometimes have Laughter amongst them ? — It is only the Laughter of Fools ; — in the midst of it there is Heaviness : — At the best, it is but like the Crackling of Thorns under a Pot ; it makes a Blaze, but soon goes out.— But, as for the Godly, it is not so with them ; — their Joy is solid and lasting.— As it is a Joy that a Stranger intermeddled not with, so it is a Joy that no Man taketh from them : It is a Joy in God, a Joy unspeakable and full of Glory.— It should seem that Zaccheus was under some distress

distress but a little while ; — Perhaps (says *Guthrie* in his Book intituled, *The Trial concerning a saving Interest in Christ*) not above a Quarter of an Hour. — I add, Perhaps not so long. — For, as one observes, sometimes the Lord Jesus delights to deliver speedily. — God is a sovereign Agent, and works upon his Children in their effectual Calling, according to the Counsel of his eternal Will. — It is with the spiritual, as natural Birth : All Women have not the like Pangs ; — all Christians have not the like Degree of Conviction. But all agree in this, viz. that they all have Jesus Christ formed in their Hearts : — And those that have not so many Trials at first, may be visited with the greater Conflicts hereafter ; — tho' they never come into Bondage again, after they have once received the Spirit of Adoption. — “ *We have not, says Paul, received the Spirit of Bondage again unto Fear.* ” — We know not what *Zaccheus* underwent before he died : — However, this one Thing I know, — he now believed in Christ, and was justified, &c. acquitted, and looked upon as righteous in God's Sight, tho' a *Publican*, chief among the *Publicans*, not many Moments before. And thus it is with all that, like *Zaccheus*, receive Jesus Christ by Faith into their Hearts : The very Moment they find Rest in him, they are freely justified from all Things from which they could not be justified by the Law of *Moses* ; — For by Grace are we saved, through Faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the Gift of God. — Say not any of you within yourselves, This is a licentious, *Antinomian* Doctrine ; — For this Faith, if true, will work by Love, and be productive of the Fruits of Holiness. — See an Instance in this

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Convert *Zaccheus* : — No sooner had he received Jesus Christ by Faith into his Heart, but he evidences it by his Works ; — for, *Ver. 8.* we are told, “ *Zaccheus stood forth, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the Half of my Goods I give unto the Poor ; and if I have taken any Thing from any Man by false Accusation, I restore him Four-fold.*”

Having believed on Jesus in his Heart, he now makes Confession of him with his Mouth to Salvation. — *Zaccheus stood forth* : — He was not ashamed, but stood forth before his Brother *Publicans*. — For true Faith casts out all servile, sinful Fear of Man. — “ *And said, Behold, Lord.*” — It is remarkable, how readily People in Scripture have owned the Divinity of Christ immediately upon their Conversion. — Thus the Woman at *Jacob's Well* ; — “ *Is not this the Christ ?*” Thus the Man born blind ; — “ *Lord, I believe ; and worshipped him.*” Thus *Zaccheus*, “ *Behold, Lord.*” An incontestable Proof this to me, that those who deny our Lord's Divinity, never effectually felt his Power : — If they had, they would not speak so lightly of him ; — they would scorn to deny his eternal Power and Godhead. — *Zaccheus stood forth, and said, Behold, Lord, the Half of my Goods I give to the Poor ; and if I have taken any Thing from any Man by false Accusation, I restore him Four-fold.* — Oh noble Fruits of a true living Faith in the Lord Jesus ! — Every Word calls for our Notice. — Not some small, not the tenth Part, but the *Half*. — Of what ? *My Goods* ; Things that were valuable. — *My Goods* ; — his own, not another's. — *I give* ; Not, *I will give* when I die, when I can keep them no longer ; but, *I give*

give now, even now. *Zaccheus* would be his own Executor. For whilst we have Time we should do Good.--- But to whom would he give Half of his Goods? Not to the Rich, not to those who were already clothed in Purple and fine Linen, of whom he might be recompensed again; but to the Poor, the Maimed, the Halt, the Blind, from which he could expect no Recompence till the Resurrection of the Dead.--- *I give to the Poor.*--- But knowing that he must be just before he could be charitable, and conscious to himself that in his publick Administrations he had wronged many Persons, he adds, "*And if I have taken any Thing from any Man by false Accusation, I restore him Four-fold.*" Hear ye this, all ye that make no Conscience of cheating the King of his Taxes, or of buying or selling Run Goods.--- If ever God gives you true Faith, you will never rest, till, like *Zaccheus*, you have made Restitution to the utmost of your Power. I suppose, before his Conversion, he thought it no Harm to cheat thus, no more than you may do now, and pleased himself frequently, to be sure, that he got so rich by doing so:--- But now he is grieved for it at his Heart;--- he confesses his Injustice before Men, and promises to make ample Restitution.--- Go ye cheating *Publicans*, learn of *Zaccheus*;--- go away and do likewise.--- If you do not make Restitution here, the Lord Jesus shall make you confess it before Men and Angels, and condemn you for it, when he comes in the Glory of his Father to Judgment hereafter.

After all this, with good Reason might our Lord say unto him, "*This Day is Salvation come to this House; forasmuch as he also is the Son of Abraham:*"--- Not so much by a natural as

by a spiritual Birth. He was made Partaker of like precious Faith with *Abraham*: — Like *Abraham* he believed on the Lord, and it was accounted to him for Righteousness: — His Faith, like *Abraham's*, worked by Love; and I doubt not but he has been long since sitting in *Abraham's* Harbour.

And now, are you not ashamed of yourselves, who speak against the Doctrines of Grace, especially that Doctrine of being justified by Faith alone, as tho' it leded to Licentiousness? What can be more unjust than such a Charge? Is not the Instance of *Zaccheus* a sufficient Proof to the contrary? Have I strained it to serve my own Turn? God forbid. — To the best of my Knowledge I have spoken the Truth in Sincerity, and the Truth as it is in Jesus. — I do affirm that we are saved by Grace, and that we are justified by Faith alone: — But I do also affirm, that Faith must be evidenced by good Works, where there is an Opportunity of performing them.

What therefore has been said of *Zaccheus*, may serve as a Rule, whereby all may judge whether they have Faith or not. — You say you have Faith; but how do you prove it? Did you ever hear the Lord Jesus call you by Name? Were you ever made to obey that Call? Did you ever, like *Zaccheus*, receive Jesus Christ joyfully into your Hearts? Are you influenced by the Faith you say you have, to stand up and confess the Lord Jesus before Men? Were you ever made willing to own, and humble yourselves for, your past Offences? Does your Faith work by Love, so that you conscientiously lay up, according as God has prospered you, for the Support of the Poor? Do you
give

give Alms of all Things that you possess? And have you made due Restitution to those you have wronged? If so, happy are ye; Salvation is come to your Souls; you are Sons, you are Daughters of, you shall shortly be everlastingly blessed with, faithful *Abraham*. But, if you are not thus minded, do not deceive your own Souls:—Tho' you may talk of Justification by Faith like Angels, it will do you no good; it will only increase your Damnation.—You hold the Truth, but it is in Unrighteousness:—Your Faith, being without Works, is dead:—You have the Devil, not *Abraham*, for your Father.—Unless you get a Faith of the Heart, a Faith working by Love, with Devils and damned Spirits shall you dwell for evermore.

But it is Time now to inforce the latter Part of the Text; “*For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*” — These Words are spoken by our Saviour in Answer to some self-righteous *Pharisees*, who, instead of rejoicing with the Angels in Heaven at the Conversion of such a Sinner, murmured, saying, *That he was gone to be a Guest with a Man that was a Sinner.*—To vindicate his Conduct, he tells them, that this was an Act agreeable to the Design of his Coming:—*For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*—He might have said, *The Son of God.*—But oh the wonderful Condescension of our Redeemer! He delights to stile himself the *Son of Man.*—He came, says he, not only to save, but to seek and to save that which was lost.—He came to *Jericho* to seek and save *Zaccheus*; for otherwise *Zaccheus* would never have been saved by him.—But from whence came
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he? Even from Heaven, his Dwelling-place, to this lower Earth, this Vale of Tears, *to seek and save that which was lost*; — All that feel themselves lost, and are willing, like *Zaccheus*, to receive him into their Hearts, to save them; — With how great a Salvation! Even from the Guilt, and also Power of their Sins: — To make them Heirs of God, and joint Heirs with himself, and Partakers of that Glory which he enjoyed with the Father before the World began: — Thus will the *Son of Man* save that which is lost. — He was made the *Son of Man* on purpose that he might save them. — He had no other End but this in leaving his Father's Throne, in obeying the moral Law, and hanging upon the Cross: — All that was done and suffered only to satisfy, and procure a Righteousness, for poor, lost, undone Sinners, and that too without Respect of Persons. — *“That which was lost”*; — All of every Nation and Language, that feel, bewail, and are truly desirous of being delivered from their lost State, the Son of Man came down to seek and to save: — For he is a God mighty, not only so, but willing, to save to the uttermost all those that come to God through him. — He will in nowise cast them out: For he is the same To-day, as he was Yesterday. He comes now to Sinners, as well as formerly; and, I hope, hath sent me out this Day to seek, and, under him, to bring home some of you, the lost Sheep of the House of *Israel*. — What say you? Shall I go home rejoicing, saying, That many like Sheep have went astray, but they have now believed on Jesus Christ, and so returned home to the great Shepherd and Bishop of their Souls? If the Lord would be pleased thus to prosper my Handy-work,

work, I care not how many Legalists and self-righteous *Pharisees* murmur against me, for offering Salvation to the worst of Sinners: — For I know the Son of Man came to seek and to save them, and the Lord Jesus will now be a Guest to the worst *Publican*, the vilest Sinner that is amongst you, if he does but believe on him. —

Make haste then, O Sinners, make haste, and come by Faith to Christ. — Then, this Day, even this Hour, nay, this Moment, if you believe, Jesus Christ shall come, and make his eternal Abode in your Hearts. — Which of you is made willing to receive the King of Glory? Which of you obeys the Call, as *Zaccheus* did? Alas! why do you stand still? How know you whether Jesus Christ may ever call you again? Come then, poor, guilty Sinners; — Come away, poor, lost, undone *Publicans*; — Make haste, I say, and come away to Jesus Christ. — The Lord condescends to invite himself to come under the filthy Roofs of the Houses of your Souls: — Do not be afraid of entertaining him; — He will fill you with all Peace and Joy in Believing. — Do not be ashamed to run before the Multitude, and to have all Manner of Evil spoke against you falsely for his Sake; — One Sight of Christ will make amends for all. — *Zaccheus* was laughed at, and *all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer Persecution*: But what of that? *Zaccheus* is now crowned in Glory, as you also shall shortly be, if you believe on, and are reproached for Christ's Sake. Do not therefore put me off with frivolous Excuses: — There's no Excuse can be given for your not coming to Christ. — You are lost, undone, without him; and, if he is not glorified in your Salvation, he

will be glorified in your Destruction; if he does not come and make his Abode in your Hearts, you must take up an eternal Abode with the Devil and his Angels. — Oh that the Lord would be pleased to pass by some of you at this Time! Oh that he may call you by his Spirit, and make you a willing People in this Day of his Power! For I know my Calling will not do, unless he, by his efficacious Grace, compel you to come in. --- Oh that you once felt what it is to receive Jesus Christ into your Hearts! You would soon, like *Zaccheus*, give him every Thing. --- You do not love Christ, because you do not know him; you do not come to him, because you do not feel your Want of him: --- You are whole, and not broken-hearted: --- You are not sick, at least not sensible of your Sickness; and therefore no wonder you do not apply to Jesus Christ, that Great, that Almighty Physician: --- You do not feel yourselves lost, and therefore do not seek to be found in Christ. --- Oh that God would wound you with the Sword of his Spirit! Oh that he would cause his Arrows of Conviction to stick deep in your Hearts! Oh that he would dart a Ray of Divine Light into your Souls! For, if you do not feel yourselves lost without Christ, you are of all Men most miserable: --- Your Souls are dead; you are not only an Image of Hell, but in some Degree Hell itself: --- You carry Hell about with you, and you know it not. --- Oh that I could see some of you sensible of this, and hear you cry out, "Lord, break this hard Heart; --- Lord, deliver me from the Body of this Death; --- Draw me, Lord, make me willing to come after thee; --- I am lost; --- Lord, save me, or I perish!" ---

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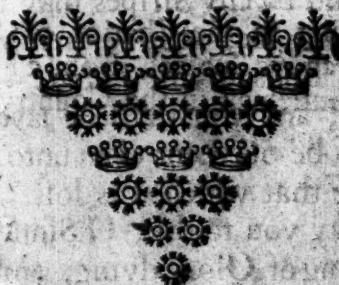
Was this your Case, how soon would the Lord stretch forth his Almighty Hand, and say, Be of good Cheer, it is I, be not afraid? --- What a wonderful Calm would then possess your troubled Souls! Your Fellowship would then be with the Father and the Son; your Life would be hid with Christ in God. --- Some of you I hope have experienced this, and can say, I was lost, but I am found; --- I was dead, but am alive again; --- The Son of Man came and sought me in the Day of his Power, and saved my sinful Soul. --- And do you repent that you came to Christ? Has he not been a good Master? Is not his Presence sweet to your Souls? Has he not been faithful to his Promise? And have you not found, that even in doing and suffering for him there is an exceeding present great Reward? I am perswaded you will answer, Yes. --- Oh then, ye Saints, recommend and talk of the Love of Christ to others, and tell them, oh tell them, what great Things the Lord has done for you! --- This may encourage others to come unto him. --- And who knows but the Lord may make you Fishers of Men? The Story of *Zaccheus* was left on Record for this Purpose. --- No truly convicted Soul, after such an Instance of Divine Grace has been laid before him, need despair of Mercy. --- What if you are *Publicans*? was not *Zaccheus* a *Publican*? What if you are Chief among the *Publicans*? was not *Zaccheus* so likewise? What if you are rich? was not *Zaccheus* rich also? And yet Almighty Grace made him more than Conquerer over all these Hindrances. --- All Things are possible to Jesus Christ; --- Nothing is too hard for him. --- He is the Lord Almighty. --- Our Mountains of Sins must all fall before

before this great *Zerubbabel*,--- On him God the Father has laid the Iniquities of all that shall believe on him, and in his own Body he bare them on the Tree.---There, there by Faith, O Mourners in *Sion*, may you see your Saviour hanging with Arms stretched out, and hear him, as it were, thus speaking to your Souls; "Behold how I have loved you!-- Behold my Hands and my Feet!-- Look, look into my wounded Side, and see a Heart flaming with Love,---Love stronger than Death.-- Come into my Arms, O Sinners, come wash your spotted Souls in my Heart's Blood. -- See here is a Fountain opened for all Sin and all Uncleaness! -- See, O guilty Souls, how the Wrath of God is now abiding upon you: -- Come, haste away, and hide yourselves in the Clefts of my Wounds; for I am wounded for your Transgressions; -- I am dying, that you may live for evermore. -- Behold, as *Moses* lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderness, so am I here lifted up upon a Tree: -- See how I am become a Curse for you; -- The Chastisement of your Peace is upon me: -- I am thus scourged, thus wounded, thus crucified, that you by my Stripes may be healed. -- Oh look unto me, all ye trembling Sinners, even to the Ends of the Earth! -- Look unto me by Faith, and you shall be saved: -- For I came thus to be obedient even unto Death, that I might save that which was lost."

And what say you to this, O Sinners? Suppose you saw the King of Glory dying, and thus speaking to you; Would you believe on him? No, you would not, unless you believe on him now: -- For tho' he is dead he yet speaketh all this in the Scripture,

Scripture, nay, in effect says all this in the Words of the Text,— *The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.* — Do not therefore any longer crucify the Lord of Glory.— Bring those Rebels, your Sins, which will not have him to reign over them; — bring them out to him: — Tho' you cannot slay them yourselves, yet he will slay them for you.— The Power of his Death and Resurrection is as great now as formerly.— Make haste therefore, make haste, O ye Publicans and Sinners, and give the dear Lord Jesus your Hearts, your whole Hearts.— If you refuse to hearken to this Call of the Lord, remember your Damnation will be just: — I am free from the Blood of you all; — You must acquit my Master and me at the terrible Day of Judgment.— Oh that you may know the Things that belong to your everlasting Peace, before they are eternally hid from your Eyes! Let all that love the Lord Jesus Christ in Sincerity, say, *Amen.*

F I N I S.



*Books lately publish'd, and sold by J. Traill
in the Parliament-clofs, and by T. Lum-
mifden and J. Robertson at their Printing-
houfe in the Fish-market.*

AN Account of God's Dealings with the Reve-
rend Mr. *George Whitefield*, from his Infancy,
to the Time of his entring into Holy Orders.

An Apology for the Presbyterians of *Scotland* who
are his Hearers.

The distinguishing Marks of a WORK of the SPIRIT
of God, applied to that *uncommon* Operation
that has lately appear'd upon the Minds of many of
the People in *New-England*. By *Jonathan Edwards*,
A. M. Minister at *Northampton*, and Author of the
New-England Narrative.

CHRIST triumphing, and Satan raging. A Ser-
mon, wherein is proved, that *the Kingdom of God is
come unto us at this Day*. By Mr. *Samuel Finley*.

DIVINE INFLUENCE the true Spring of the extra-
ordinary WORK at *Cambuslang* and other Places in
the West of *Scotland*, illustrate; In a Letter from
the Reverend Mr. *Alexander Webster* one of the Mini-
sters of *Edinburgh*, to a Gentleman in the Country.

The SIGNS of the TIMES considered: Or, The
high Probability that the present APPEARANCES
in *New-England*, and the West of *Scotland*, are a
Prelude of the glorious Things promised to the
CHURCH in the latter Ages.

CHRIST riding in the Chariot of Salvation. A
Letter on the above Subject, from a Friend in *Edin-
burgh*, to a Gentleman in the Country.

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